

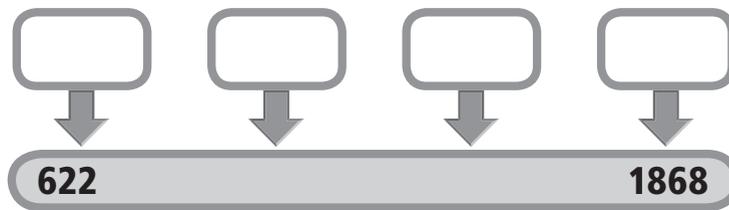
CHAPTER 8 | LESSON 3 Samurai and Shoguns

Lesson 3 Samurai and Shoguns**BEFORE YOU READ**

As you read in Lesson 1, although an emperor ruled Japan, noble families often held the real power. In this lesson, you will learn how the nobles fought each other to gain power.

AS YOU READ

As you read Lesson 3, record major events in Japan during the age of the samurai and shoguns on a time line like the one below.

**TERMS & NAMES**

- **daimyo** a large landowner in Japan
- **samurai** a trained warrior who belonged to the private armies of the daimyo
- **vassal** a person who receives land and protection from a lord in return for loyalty
- **shogun** the Japanese military leader who ruled on the emperor's behalf
- **Tokugawa Shogunate** the rule of Japan by Tokugawa Ieyasu and his successors in the Tokugawa family

Nobles Gain Power

(pages 267–268)

How did Japanese nobles gain power?

Japan remained strong and united for some time after Prince Shotoku's rule ended. By the 800s, the Fujiwara family had become the real rulers of Japan. The emperor had little power. The Fujiwaras ruled for 300 years.

In the 1100s, the power of the central government and the Fujiwara family weakened. The government began to run out of money. It also began to lose control over large landholders. As the central government grew weaker, noble families gained power. These large landowners called **daimyo** refused to pay taxes to the government. They had their own private armies of trained warriors called samurai. Each daimyo hired **samurai** to protect their own lands. They also attacked other daimyo armies. The daimyo wanted to gain more land to increase their wealth and power.

Order began to break down in society as the central government lost power.

More robberies, murders, and lawbreaking occurred. Small landowners did not feel safe. They wanted protection. They looked for a more powerful lord, or large landowner, for protection. They agreed to be loyal to this lord and serve in his army in exchange for his protection. A person who gets land and protection from a lord in return for loyalty is called a **vassal**. This new system of local rule increased the power of the daimyo. It marked the start in Japan of feudalism, a system of local rule similar to that in ancient China and medieval Europe.

1. Why did power shift from the central government to the nobles?

READING STUDY GUIDE CONTINUED

The Rise of a Military Society

(pages 268–269)

How did Japan become a military society?

The daimyo gained and held power with the help of their armies. The result was that Japan had a military society for many centuries. Warriors were a key part of this society. Samurai warriors lived by a code of honor called bushido. They were expected to be loyal and brave. They were also expected to fight for their lord even if it meant they could not protect their own families. Zen Buddhism was an important part of their lives.

Women had higher standing in society at this time than at other times. Women in warrior families learned to fight with weapons to protect their families from robbers when the men were away fighting.

The emperor remained in office while the nobles fought among themselves. But he had no real power. Military leaders called **shoguns** controlled the government and ruled the country. Shogun meant “supreme commander of the army.” Minamoto Yoritomo became the first shogun in 1192. Japan remained under a shogunate, or military government, for nearly 700 years.

2. How did Japan change when Minamoto Yoritomo came to power?

Three Powerful Warriors Unify Japan

(pages 270–273)

How did powerful military leaders unify Japan?

Three strong military leaders united Japan. They did so by ending the fighting between rival daimyo. The first of these leaders was a daimyo named Oda Nobunaga. His soldiers were the first Japanese army to use guns in battle. He won control of nearly half of Japan by wars and agreements with rivals. His best general, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, succeeded him. Hideyoshi used force and political alliances to gain control of the rest of Japan.

Wars for control of Japan broke out among Hideyoshi’s generals when he died. Tokugawa Ieyasu won the wars and became shogun. Members of his family ruled Japan for 250 years. The rule of Ieyasu and others in the Tokugawa family is called the **Tokugawa Shogunate**.

Japan was building ties with Europe when Ieyasu became shogun. Traders and missionaries had brought Western ideas and goods. The Tokugawa shoguns feared these foreign influences might change Japan. So they banned Christianity and all foreigners. They also ended nearly all foreign trade. They even would not let Japanese leave Japan. By the mid-1600s, Japan had become isolated, or separated from the world. This isolation lasted two centuries.

3. What was the result of the struggle to unite Japan?
