

# Literature Institute

## Study Guide

### LIT 532 Japanese Literature

**Instructions for the Study Guide:** Please use the questions to develop a deeper understanding of the text and to review the concepts. As you read, consider the questions. Keeping careful notes or a journal will help you prepare to write the essays at the end of each section as well as the final essay. Your required and supplemental readings can be found in the "Readings" file.

**Instructions for Essays:** Please write a 1,250 – 1,500 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

**Instructions for Final Essay:** Please write a 5,000 word essay that responds to the essay questions. Then, send your essay to your professor. You may send an outline and drafts to your instructor for feedback and guidance before you send your finished essay.

#### Required Texts

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

| UNIT/<br>WEEKS | AUTHOR /<br>WORK                          | INTRODUCTION  |
|----------------|---|---|
| I              |   | <b>Ancient Literature</b>   |
| 1-3            |   |   |
| Overview       | The Birth of Culture                      |   |
| Poetry         | <b>Man'yoshu</b>                          | The "Man'yoshu" (meaning the "collection to be handed down throughout ten thousand eras" or the "collection of ten thousand leaves") is the oldest "waka" anthology existing in Japan. It consists of 20 volumes, containing about 4,500 poems in the forms of long poems, short poems, head-repeated poems, "renga" or serial stanzas, as well as "bussokuseki-katai-ka", Chinese poems and letters. The date of composition presumably ranges across about 350 years from the era of the Emperor and Empress Nintoku (early half of the 5th century) to the year 759 in the reign of the Emperor Junjin's. Compilation is considered to have been by Otomo-no-Yakamochi. Some of the poems are "azuma-uta" (songs of the East) composed in dialects and "sakimori-uta", poems made by the border guard warriors who were levied from the rural East to guard the now North Kyushu district. Many of these verses composed by commoners have a distinct charm enriched with a deep sense of humanity that straightforwardly expresses the emotional feelings of real life. |
|                | Literary Terms                            | Waka: The word waka means "Japanese poem." The "waka" (or basic Japanese poem) is also known by the name tanka, which means "short poem."   |
|                | Comparative Literature: Cultural Identity | The Kokinshu<br>When the Emperor Udua (887-897) conceived of putting together a collection of poetry, his idea was to create an artifact that would represent and reflect not only the culture and traditions of Japan, but also the emotions and the passion that were thought to be characteristically Japanese in the sense that they expressed a philosophy and a unique view of life. In this way, the collections of lyrical poetry that exist in early Japanese literature differ from the epic tradition of the ancient Greeks. The Kokinshu contains poems that reflect love as well as life. As you read the poems in Man'yoshu and also the Kokinshu, what are some of the feelings that are evoked?   |
|                | Comparative Literature:                   | Imru al-Qays<br><i>The Mu'allagah</i>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Commemorating Heroism                       | Some of the emotions that the poems in the Man'yōshū evoke include admiration when witnessing courage and heroic action. While people can discuss what heroism is about, and can tell stories, the feelings are often hard to capture. The poetry of the Man'yōshū captures what the Japanese ruling elite valued most. The fact that they became a part of the psyche of the Japanese people is testament to the fact that the poems resonate on a very deep level. As you look at the Mu'allagah and other collections, where do you see similar feelings / ideas occurring? How is it that poems that invoke the memory of ancient times and heroic events continue to capture the imagination? |
| Comparative Literature: Memory              | <p>Samuel Beckett<br/><i>Krapp's Last Tape</i></p> <p>A life well lived is never one without painful memories. After all, one can't escape one's own mind, expectations, hopes, and dreams. The thoughts that animate one and bring joy can also cut another way and bring remorse, shame, regrets, and a sense of lost time / missed opportunities. Where do you see painful emotions emerging in the poetry contained in the Man'yōshū? Where might you see parallels with Beckett? How is memory regarded in these works?</p>   |
| Theme:                                      | Lyric poetry is often used to express emotions and experiences of everyday life. As such the themes, emotions, and impacts are often hard to categorize or classify. However, the structure is another story. Lyric poetry often adheres to a very precise form. The form can function to structure the way the images, metaphors, and prosody are presented. They can also shape the emotional impact. Do you see patterns in the form and presentation of the poems in the Man'yōshū? Granted, you're reading it in translation, but there are still a few elements that are preserved even in translation.  |
| Poetry                                      | <p><b><i>Kokinshū</i></b></p> <p>The Kokinwakashū (or the Kokinshū for short), the 'Collection of Japanese Poetry Ancient and Modern', was the first of the 21 anthologies of waka compiled at imperial command (chokusenshū). The idea of an imperial waka anthology as a 'modern' successor to the Man'yōshū was first rejected by Emperor Uda (867-931; r. 887-897), but eventually commissioned by Emperor Daigo (885-930; r. 897-930). He gave the commission to Ki no Tsurayuki, Ki no Tomonori, Ōshikōchi no Mitsune and Mibu no Tadamine, who chose about 1,111 poems, completing the anthology between 915 and 920.</p>   |
| Literary Terms                              | Tanka are 31-syllable poems that have been the most popular form of poetry in Japan for at least 1300 years. As a form of poetry, tanka is older than haiku, and tanka poems evoke a moment or mark an occasion with concision and musicality.   |
| Comparative Literature: Culture and Poetry  | <p>Man'yōshū</p> <p>The poems in the Man'yōshū cover a time span of more than 350 years and the latest predates the Kokinshū poems by at least 100 years. While it's difficult to characterize an entire culture through its anthologies, there are interesting differences to be observed. For one, the Man'yōshū covers more everyday life and times, while the Kokinshū tends to be more courtly, and hence, perhaps more elevated. What are the differences that you observe? Where?</p>   |
| Comparative Literature: Courtly Love Lyrics | The Kokinshū features a number of poems that emanate from the royal court. They deal with a very mannered sort of love and they give insight into the kind of life that people lived. Love blends with intrigue in many cases. How does the short "tanka" form evoke mystery? How does its minimalism contribute to the emotional impact?  |
| Comparative Literature: Haiku vs. tanka     | <p>Matsuo Bashō</p> <p>It is useful to keep in mind that the haiku is derived from the renga and the tanka. The haiku, however, incorporates more of a philosophical foundation as the structure and content are expected to work together to create a sense of surprise / enlightenment through juxtaposition. How would you characterize the differences between the renga form and the haiku?</p>   |
| Idea:                                       | Nature, love, and the human condition are expressed in poem cycles /series in many collections and anthologies. One might wonder why it is necessary to have an entire cycle of poems rather than being satisfied with a single poem or series. Do you see advantages in the gradual unfolding of meaning and the layered set of   |

interpretative possibilities that flow from a series or cycle? Further, what can one say about the cycle itself, as opposed to linearity? Cycles are, in fact, much different than straight lines, and if one thinks of time as linear, but life and history as cyclical, it sets up an often odd dichotomy or contradiction that says something about life itself. What are your thoughts on the matter?

|  |                               |   |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Author                                     | <b>Sei Shonagon</b>           | Sei Shonagon, like Murasaki Shikibu, was a lady-in-waiting to an empress at this time, too, but to the older, retired Empress Sadako, who evidently conducted a more relaxed court, and, since Sei Shonagon has the reputation of being the most natural wit in the history of Japanese literature, we are dealing with a very different temperament and different product than that being written by Lady Murasaki (they knew one another well enough for Lady Murasaki to criticize Sei Shonagon in her own diary for being frivolous in her impulse "to sample each interesting thing that comes along," and overly self-satisfied in her Chinese compositions, that are "full of imperfections". <a href="http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/Shonagon.html">http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/Shonagon.html</a>  |
| Essay                                      | <b><i>The Pillow Book</i></b> | <p>The Pillow Book is so called because the author tells about the Empress receiving a "bundle of notebooks" that she didn't know what to do with, and Sei Shonagon asked if she might then make a pillow of them. The Japanese pillow is a solid support, not normally made of a "bundle of notebooks," but quite possibly with a drawer that might contain such for a person who liked to write things down at odd times, and no set of writings could be more miscellaneous than these of Sei Shonagon. She particularly liked to make lists of things.</p> <p>As Morris notes, there are 164 lists in the book's "1098 closely printed pages," but, beyond this, "Shonagon's collection contains nature descriptions, diary entries, character sketches, and anecdotes . . . a list of 'awkward things', for example, is followed by an account of the Emperor's return from a shrine, after which comes a totally unrelated incident about the Chancellor that occurred a year or two earlier and then a short, lyrical description of the dew on a clear autumn morning."<sup>4</sup> The textual history is such that no one can be sure that the order of items even approximates either the original order or that finally intended by the author. Morris speculates that she very likely did begin just making random notes, then may have begun to put them in some order as they began to be read by others in the court.</p> <p>But, in any case, order doesn't seem to matter much, for the collection as a whole, composed of personal notes covering ten years at court, "reveals a complicated, intelligent, well-informed woman who was quick, impatient, keenly observant of detail, high-spirited, witty, emulative, sensitive to the charms and beauties of the world and the pathos of things, yet intolerant and callous about people whom she regarded as her social or intellectual inferiors."<br/> <a href="http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/Shonagon.html">http://www.washburn.edu/reference/bridge24/Shonagon.html</a></p> |
| Literary Terms                             |                               | Zuihitsu ("random jottings")  |
| Comparative Literature: Courtly literature |                               | Kokinshu<br>The court had knowledge of the highly respected collection of poems, the Kokinshu. Yet, <i>The Pillow Book</i> is not written in the form of stylized poetry. In fact, there is something very intimate about <i>The Pillow Book</i> – from the title to the contents. They are informal, intimate, and strangely touching. What does the form of "random jottings" of the zuihitsu style allow the author to accomplish with the reader? Select passages in the book and find similar topics in the Kokinshu. How are they different?  |
| Comparative Literature:                    |                               | Lady Murasaki<br>The Tale of Genji is a courtly romance written in elevated, sophisticated style. In many ways, it is a tragedy, and a history "writ large" to show the rise, decline, and fall of a family's aspirations. Could <i>The Pillow Book</i> be considered a similar family epic? How and why? Or, how or why not?   |
| Theme:                                     |                               | Memoirs can consist of seemingly random thoughts. The absence of a coherent narrative can result in a representation of reality that is more convincing than an epic.   |

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| Author  | <b>Murasaki Shikibu</b>                             | <p>Murasaki Shikibu is the best known writer to emerge from Japan's glorious Heian period. Her novel, <i>The Tale of Genji</i> (<i>Genji-monogatari</i>) is considered to be one of the world's finest and earliest novels. Some argue that Murasaki is the world's first modern novelist.</p> <p>Shikibu was born into the Fujiwara family, daughter of the governor of a province, who also was a well known scholar. Always very intelligent, as a child she learned more quickly than her brother, causing her father to lament, "If only you were a boy, how happy I should be!" He did, however, allow Shikibu to study with her brother, even letting her learn some Chinese classics, which was considered improper for females at the time.</p> <p>When she was in her early twenties, Lady Murasaki was married to a distant relative. Her only daughter was born in 999. After the death of her husband in 1001 A.D, knowing of her writing talent and her brilliant mind, the imperial family brought Lady Murasaki to court.</p> <p>At court, Lady Murasaki began a diary she kept up for two years. While giving a vivid account of court life, it also gives us insights into what Lady Murasaki thought. For example, she didn't like the frivolous nature of court life. Once she described a picture competition there as a "moment in the history of our country when the whole energy of the nation seemed to be concentrated upon the search for the prettiest method of mounting paper scrolls!" She also went to great pains to hide her knowledge of Chinese, fearing the criticism of those who felt it to be unladylike to be happy reading this obscure language.</p> <p><a href="http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/heroine9.html">http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/heroine9.html</a></p> |
| Fiction | <b><i>The Tale of Genji</i></b>                     | <p>Written 1,000 years ago, <i>The Tale of Genji</i> has 54 chapters and over 1,000 pages of text in its English translation. It is generally considered to be the world's first true novel, and was certainly the first psychological novel ever written.</p> <p>Genji, the hero of the Tale, is the son of the emperor and his favourite concubine, Kiritsubo. A Korean sage predicts a brilliant future for Genji but his mother suffers the jealousy of rivals at court, becomes ill and dies. The distraught emperor becomes obsessed with the tragic story of Yang Kwei-fei, but eventually finds another concubine, Fujitsubo, who reminds him of his former love.</p> <p>Since Genji lacks backing at court, the emperor makes him a commoner, assigning him membership of the non-royal Genji clan. The eldest son of the emperor and Lady Kokiden is made crown prince.</p> <p>Genji becomes an uncommonly handsome and gifted young man, admired by all but feared by Lady Kokiden and her family. The first part of the Tale follows his amorous exploits with a variety of ladies in and around Heian-kyo, his friendship with To no Chujo and arranged marriage to To no Chujo's sister Aoi, the birth of his son and his budding relationship with the young Murasaki.</p> <p><a href="http://www.taleofgenji.org/summary.html">http://www.taleofgenji.org/summary.html</a></p>  |
|         | Comparative Literature:<br>Poetry vs. Novel         | <p>The Man'yoshu<br/>The Kokinshu</p> <p>The role of poetry in courtly life was significantly different than that role of personal writings such as those of the novel. The poems were often written to be performed in a public setting, while novels were definitely to be read in a quieter, more sustained manner. What do the differences mean to the readers? How can different types of human emotions and experiences be expressed through the two entirely distinctive modes?</p>  |
|         | Comparative Literature:<br>Courtly Love and Culture | <p>Andreas Capellanus<br/><i>The Art of Courtly Love</i></p> <p>During the Renaissance, the "chaplain" Andreas Capellanus wrote what some might consider to be a rather cynical treatise on love in which he discusses the codes of love and amorous conduct. In some ways, the environment of courtly Japan was equally bound by rigid social strictures. How does the existence of such a set of codes lend itself to semi-satire? Where and how does <i>Tale of Genji</i> reflect a set of social codes regarding love and its pursuit(s)?</p>   |
|         | Comparative   | <p>Cao Xueqin</p>   |

Literature: *The Story of the Stone*  
The heroic Both Tale of Genji and the *Story of the Stone* are populated by amorous heroes and characters who illustrate / reflect Buddhist thought and precepts. The heroic elements, however, are presented in quite different ways. What are they?

**Unit Essay** E1. Compare and contrast the works in this unit, and discuss how love is depicted in various settings, including the court, and with cultural and family pressures.

## II Middle Period

4-6

Fiction ***Tale of Heike*** The Tale of the Heike is a long narrative about the fall of the Taira clan and the victory of the Minamoto. It has no single author and was probably compiled from various oral sources, but it does present a comprehensive tale of the rise and fall of Kiyomori. The sympathy of the Heike is with the Taira, who are presented as tragic aristocrats, overcome by the rough forces of the provincial Minamoto. The tale nonetheless valorizes the courage and shrewdness of the Minamoto, even as it laments the downfall of the Taira. The tale embraces the Japanese sense that their tradition is both courtly and military; both urban and provincial; both elegant and rustic.

The Tale of the Heike is a one of a genre of *gunki monogatari* (military tales) and probably played a significant role in shaping military ethics and values: personal loyalty to one's lord; negation of the self; self-sacrifice unto death; an austere and simple life; control of the appetites and emotions; an honorable death. Loyalty to one's lord superceded all other loyalties, even to one's family and children whose lives, in extreme situations, could be sacrificed to protect the life of one's lord.  
<http://f99.middlebury.edu/JA216A/heike/heike.html>

Comparative Literature: Beowulf  
For the community reflected in Beowulf, honor and allegiance in battle are reflections of one's tribal / familial fealties. In fact, one might even say that the monster (Grendel) is not a literal beast, but is an extended metaphor for collective or individual doubt and disloyalty. Are there similar possible interpretations in *The Tale of the Heike*? What happens to people who refuse to sacrifice themselves? What does disloyalty look like? What does loyalty and honor look like? Are there potential extended metaphors in the narrative?

Comparative Literature: Shakespeare  
*Henry V*  
The idea of honor and valor in battle; military ethics, values, and the notion of self-sacrifice appear in Henry V. However, the world of Henry V is not one of Beowulf, and loyalty is also linked to the notion of the Great Chain of Being, and the high standards set for the king. How could the "gunki monogatari" genre parallel that of Shakespeare's plays in the way that narratives lead to an enactment of values?

Author **Zeami Motokiyo** Kanze Zeami (1364-1444), also called Zeami Motokiyo, was a Japanese actor, playwright, and critic.

Drama ***Atsumori*** Play based on traditional narratives about the war between the Genji/Minamoto and Heike/Taira clans (1180-1185).

The priest Rensei (formerly the warrior Kumagai of the Genji/Minamoto clan) returns to the site of a battle (Ichi-no-Tani) where he killed Atsumori (a warrior of the Heike/Taira clan). Regretting the killing, Rensei prays for the soul of Atsumori. The ghost of Atsumori appears to Rensei. Though angry at Rensei and about to strike him with a sword, the ghost of Atsumori is appeased by Rensei's prayers and the two are reconciled. <http://fajardo-acosta.com/worldlit/zeami/>

Comparative Literature: Shakespeare  
*Hamlet*  
Both Shakespeare and Atsumori create works that explore the idea that an outraged (murdered) patriarch would reappear after death as a ghost. In one, however, ultimate goal is reconciliation, while the other ends in a nihilistic tarantella

of violence – violence that suggests that violence begets violence, and that there is no real possibility of redemption. In Shakespeare, religion is stripped of its power to redeem, transform, or even assuage. In Atsumori, the grief that occurs when the balance of the world has been upset is illustrated by the presence of vengeful ghosts. What are other core differences in Atsumori's play?

Idea : What does the presence of the supernatural bring to a narrative? What are some of the messages that can be conveyed effectively via the supernatural? What are  
 Persona some of the psychological dimensions of the incorporation of the supernatural in the narrative?

**Unit Essay** E2. Discuss themes of honor, revenge, and psychological distress in the works in this unit. How are they culturally distinct?

**III Early Modern Japan**

7-9

Overview Tokugawa Era The Tokugawa shogunate, also known as the Tokugawa bakufu (徳川幕府?) and the Edo bakufu (江戸幕府?), was a feudal regime of Japan established by Tokugawa Ieyasu and ruled by the shoguns of the Tokugawa family. This period is known as the Edo period and gets its name from the capital city, Edo, which now is called Tokyo. The Tokugawa shogunate ruled from Edo Castle from 1603 until 1868, when it was abolished during the Meiji Restoration. (Wikipedia)

Author **Ihara Saikaku** Ihara Saikaku was born Hirayama Togo in Osaka in 1642, and little is known about his early life. Despite sketchy personal details, Saikaku's reputation as a novelist, poet and playwright who was the toast of Genroku-era Osaka is unquestionable. Saikaku Ihara (1641-93), novelist and poet, is credited with founding the genre called ukiyo-zoshi (books of the floating world), a type of popular fiction written between the 1680s and the 1770s. Once downgraded as vulgar, today Saikaku is acclaimed a great realist, largely because of his minute and accurate delineation of characters, customs, and events of his day. <http://www.powells.com/biblio/2-0804801843-3>

Fiction **Five Women Who Loved Love** This book follows five determined women in their always amorous and usually illicit adventures. The five heroines are Onatsu, already wise in the ways of love by the age of sixteen; Osen, a faithful wife unjustly accused of adultery; Osan, a Kyoto beauty who falls asleep in the wrong bed; Oshichi, willing to burn down a city to meet her samurai lover; and Oman, who has to compete with handsome boys to win her lover's affections. (Wikipedia)

Comparative Literature: Lady Murasaki *The Tale of Genji*. Both authors discuss the traits of the ideal woman. The woman with the traits considered most ideal might not be one accorded the highest rank, status, or prestige in society. In *Five Women Who Loved Love*, the women who seem to meet society's ideals of femininity may seem rather scandalous. In certain ways, the women who are most adept at meeting society's expectations are the most wily and uninhibited in using their charm to achieve their rather self-gratifying ends. How did their behavior surprise you as a reader, and what did it make you think of the role of women in society?

Comparative Literature: Moliere. *Tartuffe*. Love outside the bounds of marriage was accepted in some societies as long as it followed certain proscribed conventions. Japanese customs may shock people from other societies, but they had definite implicit codes to follow. However, there are always the outlaws and transgressors whose behavior serves to reinforce the codes, and to function as cautionary tales (even as they titillate the readers. Both works involve adultery. How are the cultural conventions different in each? Were there any gender-based double standards?

Comparative Literature James Joyce. *The Dead*.

Both Joyce and Saikaku present their stories as objectively as possible, without adding a great deal of sentimentality. What is the impact on the reader? How are the two authors similar? Different?

Idea:  
Fantasy The adventures of the women in *Five Women Who Loved Love* are larger than life, and they pique the imagination of the reader. How is the series of adventures akin to fantasy? How does fantasy fuel the imagination, and a sense of reality?

Theme Love comes in many shapes and forms in *Five Women Who Loved Love*. What does love reveal about values, attitudes, and beliefs?

10-12

Overview Edo period Tokugawa Ieyasu was the most powerful man in Japan after Hideyoshi had died in 1598. Against his promises he did not respect Hideyoshi's successor Hideyori because he wanted to become the absolute ruler of Japan. In the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Ieyasu defeated the Hideyori loyalists and other Western rivals. Hence, he achieved almost unlimited power and wealth. In 1603, Ieyasu was appointed Shogun by the emperor and established his government in Edo (Tokyo). The Tokugawa shoguns continued to rule Japan for a remarkable 250 years. <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2128.html>

Author **Matsuo Basho** Basho (bah-shoh), pseudonym of Matsuo Munefusa (1644-94), Japanese poet, considered the finest writer of Japanese haiku during the formative years of the genre. Born into a samurai family prominent among nobility, Basho rejected that world and became a wanderer, studying Zen, history, and classical Chinese poetry, living in apparently blissful poverty under a modest patronage and from donations by his many students. From 1667 he lived in Edo (now Tokyo), where he began to compose haiku. [http://www.poetryconnection.net/poets/Matsuo\\_Basho](http://www.poetryconnection.net/poets/Matsuo_Basho)

Travelogue ***The Narrow Road through Backcountry*** In 1689, Basho began his third pilgrimage in five years. The trip lasted more than two years and is recorded in his travel diary titled *Oku-no-hosomichi*, which translates roughly as the Narrow Road through the Backcountry or the Narrow Road to the Interior. Like his other trips, Basho is profoundly interested in sites that resonate with sacred, historical, or personal meaning. He is also deeply affected by the raw experience of natural phenomena. While Basho's journey does not broach the themes of global travel, exploration, and contact like Shakespeare's *Tempest*, what it does offer is a more subtle and profound illustration of the personal, philosophical, and aesthetic dimensions of life on the road. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/11993834/On-the-Road-Again>

Literary Terms haikai no renga

Comparative Literature: Voltaire. *Candide*. Both Basho and Voltaire describe a journey. The journeys are quite different, however. For Basho, the journey is metaphorical and even metaphysical. The concrete details of the path he takes function as extended metaphors whose purpose is to illustrate the way the mind makes meaning, and the ineluctable essences of the intersection of human consciousness and external form. On the other hand, Voltaire is absolutely pragmatic in his narrative. There is figurative meaning, but it is used satirically, with the goal of criticizing specific people and institutions, as well as to lampoon human nature. It is small wonder that Voltaire spent time in Bastille prison.

Comparative Literature: Wordsworth. Poems. Both authors use nature as a way to approach a transcendent moment, an insight into how the mind makes meaning, and builds knowledge of spiritual / emotional truths. For Wordsworth, the journey only starts to imbue one's life with meaning long after the road dust has been brushed off and what happened has passed into a faded (an obviously idealized) recollection. In this way, Wordsworth is able to look at the journey as an excursion into the ideal. For Basho, it's not necessary for time to pass, and what the journey reveals is not necessarily ideal. Instead, it's more or

less irreducible, and can be perplexing in the way of Daoism and other strands of Eastern thought.

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Comparative Literature: | Ramprasad Sen.<br><i>Stories of Kali</i> ,<br>Both authors deal with struggles which take place deep within the interior. Kali is a purging, purify-by-fire entity, and the impact on the mind is intended to be extremely powerful. An encounter with Kali would be unforgettable because it would utterly transforming. For Basho, the changes and encounters are more subtle. There is more of a sense of choice as well. You do not have to contemplate the delicate juxtapositions of haiku as something that must, as a matter of course, pass your psyche through a metaphysical fire. Instead, with Basho, for maximum impact, you should let yourself sink into the space of paradox that leads to awakening.  |
| Idea:                   | The spiritual journey or quest is often found in literature. How do the journeys lead to transcendence and/or a mystical experience?  |
| Psychology              | How does the work explore the personal, philosophical, and aesthetic dimensions of life on the road?  |
| Author                  | <b>Chikamatsu Monzaemon</b><br>Chikamatsu wrote 130 plays. Chikamatsu may be seen as the quintessential representative of the Genroku period (1688-1703), the Japanese Renaissance period which comes about 100 years later than the Elizabethan period in England, and has much the same character, as Tokugawa Ieyasu, after his victory at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, established the Tokugawa bakufu, absolute political control. In each case, the period of civil war was over and a strong royal (shogunate) family was clearly in control, so that, after this period of stability had been in place about a hundred years, it generated, in each case, a middle-class urban environment in which the arts, particularly literature, and particularly dramatic literature, began to flourish.  |
| Drama                   | <b><i>The Love Suicides at Amijima</i></b><br>The LOVE SUICIDE AT AMIJIMA is one of his enduring domestic plays, or sewamono, which are almost entirely his invention. These plays deal with the everyday life of the chōnin (townspeople of Osaka), and usually depict a conflict between an affair of the heart (illicit affair, love for prostitute) and the requirements of duty (obligations derived from the social system), frequently attended by financial difficulties. The present play shares all of these trappings.<br><br>Jihei, a paper merchant, is married to Osan, his niece, and has two young children. He has fallen hopelessly in love with Koharu, a prostitute in the Gay Quarter. They have vowed eternal love but because he is unable to redeem her, have been promising each other to commit suicide at the first available opportunity. Osan, fearing exactly this, writes a letter to Koharu in secret imploring her to sever her relationship with Jihei and thus save his life. The giri (sense of duty) to a fellow woman compels Koharu to discharge her obligation and she pretends to disavow her promise. The distraught Jihei renounces their love and returns home. When his wealthy rival in love, Tahei, buys Koharu off, Jihei faces a public humiliation that he cannot bear. At the same time Osan realizes that Koharu will commit suicide rather than go off with Tahei because she is not unfaithful (as Jihei thinks) but has been prevented from killing herself only by Osan's plea, which will no longer bind her. Osan, the epitome of the faithful wife, urges Jihei to pawn their last clothes and buy Koharu off to save both her life and his dignity. At this moment, Gonzaemon, Jihei's father-in-law appears and forcefully takes Osan away, ending the marriage. Jihei and Koharu manage to slip away at night, journey (michiyuki) along the bridges to the Amijima, and commit suicide.<br><br><a href="http://www.gotterdammerung.org/books/reviews//love-suicide-at-amijima.html">http://www.gotterdammerung.org/books/reviews//love-suicide-at-amijima.html</a> |
| Theme:                  | Love and self-destruction.  |
| Philosophy              | What are the ethical values reflected in the love suicides at Amijima?  |
| Comparative Literature: | Dante<br><i>The Divine Comedy</i> .<br>In Dante's Divine Comedy, there are circles in both Purgatory and in the Inferno to  |

punish those who commit for amatory “errors.” For example, Paulo and Francesca had an adulterous love affair and it results in punishment in the second circle of hell. The Wood of Suicides is even lower – in the seventh level. Obviously, it was worse for individuals to commit suicide than to commit adultery, according to the medieval Catholic church. In contrast, one has the sense that in Japan, suicide is considered very differently. How are views of suicide related to underlying moral and religious codes?

Comparative Literature: Mori Ogai.  
 “The Dancing Girl”  
 Love triangles, with very different outcomes. One has a promise of salvation; the other resignation. The Love Suicides at Amijima contrasts with “The Dancing Girl” in the level to which effort is expended in order to defend honor, avoid humiliation, and preserve societal balance.

**IV 10-15 Modern Japan**

Meiji Perion Meiji Period In 1867/68, the Tokugawa era found an end in the Meiji Restoration. The emperor Meiji was moved from Kyoto to Tokyo which became the new capital; his imperial power was restored. The actual political power was transferred from the Tokugawa Bakufu into the hands of a small group of nobles and former samurai.

Like other subjugated Asian nations, the Japanese were forced to sign unequal treaties with Western powers. These treaties granted the Westerners one-sided economical and legal advantages in Japan. In order to regain independence from the Europeans and Americans and establish herself as a respected nation in the world, Meiji Japan was determined to close the gap to the Western powers economically and militarily. Drastic reforms were carried out in practically all areas.

The new government aimed to make Japan a democratic state with equality among all its people. The boundaries between the social classes of Tokugawa Japan were gradually broken down. Consequently, the samurai were the big losers of those social reforms since they lost all their privileges. The reforms also included the establishment of human rights such as religious freedom in 1873.  
<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2130.html>

Author **Takizawa Bakin** Takizawa Bakin was the dominant Japanese writer of the early 19th century, admired for his lengthy, serious historical novels that are highly moral in tone.  
 Bakin was the third son of a low-ranking samurai family. His father and mother died while he was still young, and, because of the famine and plague that struck Edo after 1780, he alone lived to continue his family name. After much drifting, he relinquished samurai status, married a merchant’s widow, and devoted the next 50 years to writing. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/581232/Takizawa-Bakin>

**Hakkenden** Adapted from the famous samurai masterpiece, Hakkenden tells the tale of eight samurai brothers. Reincarnated and bound to defend the Awa clan, these eight souls must find one another and unite to stop a powerful demonic force. However, the demons that oppose them are determined to keep them separate and even place them in mortal combat against one another. It is up to Shino, the bearer of the Murasame, to find his wayward brothers and convince them to fight as allies. <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/encyclopedia/anime.php?id=249>

Comparative Literature Goethe.  
*Faust*.  
 Both Goethe and Bakin look at the way that relationships are sacrificed. In many ways, the *Hakkenden* brings together a warrior code and the idea of overcoming separation in death. The fragmentation that occurs when the samurai brothers are separated by demons. In the case of Goethe, Faust is not fragmented as much as taken over and possessed, first by greed and unwholesome desires for what he cannot have (unlimited knowledge, etc.), and then by the powers of darkness (Mephistopheles). In certain ways, one could argue that both works of literature are ultimately generative yet also nihilistic. They address the irreducible contradictions in human existence, which results in the fact that the human condition is marked by constant battle and inner struggle.

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Comparative Literature  | Virgil.<br><i>The Aeneid</i> .<br>Kalidasa<br><i>Shakuntala</i> .<br>Choosing between love and duty is never easy. In fact, it is one of the main preoccupations of literature since, beginning with ancient times (the story of Isaac and Abraham, the great Greek tragedies, and more). Consider the works of Virgil, Kalidasa, and Bakin. In which cases does the love / duty dialect translate into a narrative that is truly epic?   |
| Author                  | <b>Mori Ōgai</b><br>Mori Ōgai was the literary name of Mori Rintarō, the son of the doctor to the daimyō of Tsuwano province (in present-day Shimane Prefecture). Ōgai's mother was a strict disciplinarian who pushed Ōgai toward the pursuit of academic excellence throughout his youth. At the domain's Yōrōkan school, Ōgai acquired a solid foundation in the Confucian classics and also in Dutch studies. Ōgai was subsequently sent to Tokyo, where in 1874 he enrolled in the preparatory course of the medical department at Tokyo University, adding two years to his age in order to get in. He graduated from the university at the age 19, becoming the youngest ever to do so, and started a career as an army surgeon.<br><a href="http://www.jlit.net/authors_works/mori_ogai.html">http://www.jlit.net/authors_works/mori_ogai.html</a>                              |
| Fiction                 | <b><i>The Dancing Girl</i></b><br>Early novellas such as <i>Maihime</i> (Dancing Girl, 1890) show an idealistic romanticism and elements of his own experience in Germany. <i>Gan</i> (Wild Goose, 1911–1913), a romantic tale of unrequited love, remains one of the author's most popular works. In his middle period, following the death of Emperor Meiji, he turned to the past and produced many historical works, both fictional and biographical. His late period yielded biographies of doctors of the Edo period. Some of his masterful translations include Andersen's <i>Improvisatoren</i> , Goethe's <i>Faust</i> , Ibsen's <i>Ghosts</i> and <i>A Doll's House</i> , Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> , and hundreds more.<br><a href="http://www.bookrags.com/research/mori-ogai-ema-04/">http://www.bookrags.com/research/mori-ogai-ema-04/</a>                            |
| Comparative Literature: | Homer.<br><i>The Odyssey</i> .<br>In both Homer and in Ōgai, there is a struggle between nationalistic duty and emotional desire for the outside. The outside is considered dangerous, yet appealing because it is taboo. Romanticism involves creating the ideal in one's own mind, and then accepting the realization that it is not attainable. How does Ōgai's sense of helplessness in the face of desire compare with Homer's encounters with the Sirens?   |
| Comparative Literature: | Rabindranath Tagore.<br><i>Broken Ties</i> .<br>Tensions between different value systems.   |
| Theme:                  | Unrequited love   |
| Idea:                   | Romantic love as impossible without elements of loss, and longing without resolution.   |
| Author                  | <b>Higuchi Ichiyo</b><br>Poet and novelist. Born in Tokyo. In 1886, she entered the Haginoya poetry academy of Utako Nakajima. Her father's death in 1889 forced her to earn the family's living. In 1891, she became a pupil of Tosui Nakarai and began writing stories. "Umoregi" (Undiscovered Wood), published in 1892, became a breakthrough hit and won her contacts with people in the "Bungakkai" (the literary world). To earn a living, she also ran a shop dealing in household goods and cheap sweets at Ryusenji-machi in Shitaya-ku. Higuchi left not only novels such as "Otsugomori" (The Last Day of the Year) (1894), "Nigorie" (Muddy Bay) (1895), and "Takekurabe" (Growing Up) (1895), but also her diaries. She died in poverty of lung tuberculosis. <a href="http://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/315.html">http://www.ndl.go.jp/portrait/e/datas/315.html</a> |
| Fiction                 | <b><i>The Thirteenth Night</i></b><br>The <i>Thirteenth Night</i> focuses on the social conventions that impede a young woman seeking to escape from an abusive marriage. Higuchi's diary, published after her death, describes in her lyrical prose style the motivation and inspiration for many of her works.  |

|         |                           |   |
|---------|---------------------------|---|
|         | Comparative Literature:   | Gustav Flaubert.<br>"A Simple Heart"<br>The techniques of realism in fiction.   |
|         | Comparative Literature:   | Henrik Ibsen.<br><i>Hedda Gabler</i><br>Women making scandalous decisions with respect to their families and social mores.  |
|         | Theme:                    | Women's lives and abusive relationships   |
|         | Idea:                     | How does the tension established when there is the possibility of impending and ongoing abuse make a statement about opposing realities?  |
| Author  | <b>Tanizaki Junichiro</b> | Junichiro Tanizaki was born in Nihombashi, in the commercial district near Tokyo Bay. His family owned a printing press, founded by Tanizaki's grandfather near the rice merchants' quarter. "Grandfather was very fond of me, his last grandchild; and sometimes in later years I suddenly felt I could hear his voice calling my name – "Jun'ichi, Jun'ichi," as he had during my earliest years, while he was still alive. A much-enlarged photograph of him was always prominently displayed in our house, so I got to know his face well, and could call it to mind and so encounter Grandfather whenever I wished." After falling on hard times Tanizaki's family had lost much of its former wealth. Tanizaki worshiped his mother who breast-fed him until he was 6. Despite financial problems, his parents pampered him and took him to countless theatrical performances, which early gave birth to the author's passion for drama and the traditional Japanese arts.<br><a href="http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/tanizaki.htm">http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/tanizaki.htm</a> |
| Fiction | <b>Aguri</b>              |   |
|         | Comparative Literature:   | Milan Kundera<br>"The Hitchhiking Game"<br>The two stories have to do with the stability and formation of identity in a modern or postmodern world. In the world of the characters of "Aguri" and also in "The Hitchhiking Game," the moment an identity comes into focus, it disintegrates under the pressure of a kind of existential discomfort. While the characters may seem to be engaged in controlling the other, the reality is that their actions make it clear how difficult it is to control anything in the phenomenal world.  |
|         | Comparative Literature:   | Thomas Mann<br>"Death in Venice"<br>The difference between love and desire is explored by both Thomas Mann and Tanizaki. Sexual obsession is not love and yet the obsessions of the protagonists in Aguri and in The Hitchhiking Game create the foundation of a relationship that might be considered love. Compare and contrast the two works.  |
|         | Comparative Literature:   | Evelyn Waugh<br><i>Decline and Fall</i><br>The work, Decline and Fall, deals with a family that has lost its position in the world of post-war England. How does a family deal with the loss of prestige, status, and resources?  |
|         | Theme:                    | Decline, loss of energy, entropy: The existential consequences of the loss of a family or community's prestige or standing  |
| Author  | <b>Yasunari Kawabata</b>  | Yasunari Kawabata, son of a highly-cultivated physician, was born in 1899 in Osaka. After the early death of his parents he was raised in the country by his maternal grandfather and attended the Japanese public school. From 1920 to 1924, Kawabata studied at the Tokyo Imperial University, where he received his degree. He was one of the founders of the publication Bungei Jidai, the medium of a new movement in modern Japanese literature. Kawabata made his debut as a writer with the short story, Izu dancer, published in 1927. After several distinguished works, the novel Snow Country in 1937 secured Kawabata's position as one of the leading authors in Japan. In 1949, the publication of the serials Thousand Cranes and The Sound of the Mountain was commenced. He became a member of the Art Academy of Japan in 1953 and four years later he was appointed chairman of the P.E.N. Club of Japan. At several international congresses Kawabata was the  |

|         |  |  |
|---------|--|--|
|         |  | <p>Japanese delegate for this club. The Lake (1955), The Sleeping Beauty (1960) and The Old Capital (1962) belong to his later works, and of these novels, The Old Capital is the one that made the deepest impression in the author's native country and abroad. In 1959, Kawabata received the Goethe-medal in Frankfurt.</p> <p><a href="http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1968/kawabata-bio.html">http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1968/kawabata-bio.html</a></p>   |
| Fiction | <p><b>“The Moon on the Water”</b></p> <p><b>“Snow”</b></p> | <p>There is a deep level of symbolism which involves the use of mirrors and the nature of Kyoko's relationship with her first and second husband. Specifically, her first husband died from a long illness, and one may begin to think that Kyoko's first marriage was more like mother and child.</p> <p>One of Kawabata's most famous novels, published in various installments between 1935-37, but not "completed" until 1947. The main character, Shimamura, is a wealthy, cynical yet wishful dilettante, who is an expert on Occidental ballet without having seen a ballet. He is involved in a love affair with Komako, a hot spring geisha who has remained clean amongst the corruption in the snow country . Mixed into all of this is the intense young woman Yoko, whom Shimamura finds captivating. However, neither women can bring Shimamura out of his detachment from humanity, and love, given freely on all sides, proves to be a "wasted effort".</p> <p><a href="http://faculty.otterbein.edu/PReichert/kawaprim.htm">http://faculty.otterbein.edu/PReichert/kawaprim.htm</a></p> |
|         | Comparative Literature:                                    | <p>T. S. Eliot<br/>The Waste Land</p> <p>The sense of confusion, loss and alienation following a wartime experience. The works connect randomness, characters, their moods, and their contexts. The description, flow of thoughts, stream of consciousness – all come together to paint a profile of a psychological situation, which mirrors the collective consciousness.</p>  |
|         | Comparative Literature:                                    | <p>Sherwood Anderson<br/>Winesburg, Ohio</p> <p>The story structure of the stories in Winesburg, Ohio is reminiscent of Kawabata's "tanagokoro no shosetsu" (palm-of-the-hand stories). The story, "Hands," is about Wing Biddlebaum, an isolated and shame-riddled man. The "palm of the hand" story encapsulates a profound truth about the postmodernist world.</p>   |
|         | Idea:  | Dealing with profound disappointment and the fall from status, wealth, even grandeur eerily foreshadows the Japanese post-war experience   |
| Author  | <b>Ryuichi Tamura</b>                                      | <p>Tamura was instrumental in establishing the monthly poetry magazine, The Waste Land (Arechi) in 1947. He edited the first and the second numbers, with Saburo Kuroda taking over from the third through the sixth, the last of the monthly issues. Tamura also edited the annual anthologies Waste Land Poetry 1951 through Waste Land Poetry 1958, containing work by his fellow poets as well as his own. Through these activities, Tamura and his group, including Nobuo Ayukawa and Saburo Kuroda, laid the foundations of Japan's post-WWII poetry, and built a lasting monument of their own times. These poets are often called "the Waste Land Poets".</p>  |
| Poetry  | Poems  | <p>Tamura's poetic style is a total departure from the past, and unique even among his contemporaries. He speaks of a certain poem by Ayukawa as being an epiphany that inspired him to write a poem, but the style and concept of his work are strictly his own. Many poets of later generations describe their first encounter with Tamura's poetry as 'shocking', revelatory', 'eye-opening', or 'awe-inspiring', regardless of their own inclinations or taste. His poetry remains fresh and powerful.</p> <p><a href="http://japan.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw/cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=9462">http://japan.poetryinternationalweb.org/piw/cms/cms/cms_module/index.php?obj_id=9462</a></p>  |
|         | Comparative Literature:                                    | <p>T.S. Eliot<br/>The Waste Land</p> <p>Inspiration from a sense of alienation, a willingness to explore new areas, and propose a kind of rawness of perception. The condition of Europe after the trench warfare of World War I led to the "lost generation" of poets and writers who described the spiritual as well as physical devastation. Hiroshima was reduced to scorched earth, as was the collective psyche of the survivors. How were the two representations different?</p>  |
|         | Comparative  | John Berryman  |

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Literature:             | <p>Poems</p> <p>Confessional poetry – an exploration of the dark edges of one’s psyche; poems about depression, suicide, despair. Berryman’s <i>Dream Songs</i> contain “scrambled diction, extraordinary leaps of language and tone, and wild mixture of high lyricism and low comedy plumbed the extreme reaches of a human soul and psyche” and echo the same energy of post-Hiroshima Japan.</p> <p><a href="http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/6">http://www.poets.org/poet.php/prmPID/6</a></p>   |
| Theme:                  | <p>Survival; psychological intensity</p>  |
| Idea:                   | <p>Like Dostoevsky (Notes from the Underground), Tamura is willing to acknowledge (and even celebrate) the way the human mind contorts under pressure – from the pressure comes a raw honesty about the way the world really is.</p>  |
| Author                  | <p><b>Kobo Abe</b></p> <p>Abe Kōbō (pron. "AH-bay KOH-boh") (1924-1993) stands out dramatically from his contemporaries in postwar Japanese literature. His works bear no resemblance to the subjective, ultra-realistic and autobiographical style that characterizes a great deal of postwar literature in general and postwar Japanese literature in particular. The reason for this, it has become customary to point out, probably lies in his relatively unique upbringing. Abe grew up in Manchuria, or Manchukuo as the Japanese leasehold/puppet state was known at the time. As such he presumably did not develop the deep ties to such concepts as furusato (hometown) and the emperor, both of which play large roles in the works of contemporaries Mishima Yukio and Nobel laureate Oe Kenzaburo. Furthermore, Abe did not undergo formal training in literature as did so many of his contemporaries. Instead he followed in his father’s footsteps, studying medicine at Tokyo Imperial University. Unlike another famous medical doctor in Japanese literature, Mori Ogai, Abe did not excel in this field, nor did it seem that he had any particular enthusiasm for a life in medicine. It is said that he was allowed to graduate only on the condition that he never practice medicine. <a href="http://www.ibiblio.org/abekobo/">http://www.ibiblio.org/abekobo/</a></p> |
| Fiction                 | <p><b>“The Red Cocoon”</b></p> <p>One might say that Kobo’s story is in many ways a homage to Kafka, with an added dimension of homelessness as an existential state.</p> <p><b>“The Stick”</b></p> <p>The worst thing that can happen to a person is to be the equivalent of a stick – lying on the ground, passive, waiting for the next person to stop by, pick you up, use you, and then discard you.</p>   |
| Comparative Literature: | <p>Franz Kafka</p> <p>“Metamorphosis”</p> <p>Alienation and a metamorphosis away from human to non-human. For Kobo’s protagonists, to be transformed into a caterpillar or a stick means having to look at the world in a new way. The world has not changed as much as they have themselves, and the things that occurred to make them change make it equally impossible to change back into a human state again. In certain ways, the symbolism suggests how to deal with the loss of one’s humanity; or perhaps the collective loss of humanity. The interesting element may be that while Kafka’s response is that of horror and revulsion, Kobo’s protagonists are relatively calm about their newly constricted existences. Is it emotional paralysis? Indifference? What does the world have as its future when it is populated by dehumanized, desensitized beings?</p>   |
| Comparative Literature: | <p>Albert Camus</p> <p>“The Myth of Sisyphus”</p> <p>The existentialist struggle involves making meaning from ordinary events. But, what is ordinary about the loss of one’s humanity? In the case of the biblical account of Lot’s wife, who was transformed into a pillar of salt when she disobeyed God and looked back on the iniquitous cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the implications are clear. Longing, nostalgia, and “looking back” will turn you into a pillar of salt. In other words, they’ll paralyze you. In the case of Camus and also Kafka, if you witness enough atrocities, and you thrive in a totalitarian state, there is a good chance you’ll lose your humanity. At the very least, forward progress will be problematic.</p>  |
| Theme:                  | <p>Homelessness as an existential condition, and one which allows one to see the world in an unfiltered way</p>   |

|        |                         |   |
|--------|-------------------------|---|
|        | Idea:                   | The issues of the limits of agency and self-determination are probed in both "The Stick" and "The Red Cocoon"   |
| Author | <b>Kenzaburo Oe</b>     | Kenzaburo Oe was born in 1935, in a village hemmed in by the forests of Shikoku, one of the four main islands of Japan. His family had lived in the village tradition for several hundred years, and no one in the Oe clan had ever left the village in the valley. Even after Japan embarked on modernization soon after the Meiji Restoration, and it became customary for young people in the provinces to leave their native place for Tokyo or the other large cities, the Oes remained in Ose-mura. Maps no longer show the small hamlet by name because it was annexed by a neighbouring town. The women of the Oe clan had long assumed the role of storytellers and had related the historical events of the region, including the two uprisings that occurred there before and after the Meiji Restoration. They also told of events closer in nature to legend than to history. These stories, of a unique cosmology and of the human condition therein, which Oe heard told since his infancy, left him with an indelible mark. |
| Essay  | <b>Hiroshima Notes</b>  | Hiroshima Notes is a powerful statement on the Hiroshima bombing and its terrible legacy by the 1994 Nobel laureate for literature. Oe's account of the lives of the many victims of Hiroshima and the valiant efforts of those who cared for them, both immediately after the atomic blast and in the years that follow, reveals the horrific extent of the devastation. It is a heartrending portrait of a ravaged city - the "human face" in the midst of nuclear destruction.<br><a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=CoaDBX-ZsesC&amp;source=gbs_navlinks_s">http://books.google.com/books?id=CoaDBX-ZsesC&amp;source=gbs_navlinks_s</a>  |
|        | Comparative Literature: | Kurt Vonnegut<br><i>Slaughterhouse-5</i><br>The action takes place in Dresden during the fire-bombing by Allied forces. Billy Pilgrim, an Assistant Chaplain, poorly trained and psychologically unprepared for war, is captured by the Germans and forced to stay in an old carcass warehouse, the "Slaughterhouse #5." In the meantime, they are fire-bombed. Not surprisingly, Pilgrim loses his grip on reality, and begins to time-travel as the bombs fall. The narrative often has a mystical quality, and seems to resonate with religious rites. This quality creates an echo with Vonnegut, and a resonance that disturbs as much as it reassures one that perhaps survival is possible through disassociation.   |
|        | Comparative Literature: | Erich Remarque<br><i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i><br>A depiction of the physical and psychological realities of trench warfare during World War I, <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> refuses to romanticize war, and it undermines the rhetoric of heroism and valor by demonstrating that the truth of war is that there is no such thing as heroic sacrifice. True heroism occurs in the quest to regenerate a society after mass death, and to remember and respect the once-living souls that forged the original community.  |
|        | Comparative Literature: | Tim O'Brien<br>The Things They Carried<br>Tim O'Brien's narrative depicts the emotional toll that war takes; focus on a squad of infantry soldiers during Vietnam. It is highly effective because it rehumanizes the military effort and gives names, faces, and histories to the lowest-ranking infantry "grunts" who run the risk of dying with every forward step they take.   |
|        | Theme:                  | The horror, devastation, and overwhelming sense of loss that accompanied the Hiroshima bombing  |
|        | Idea:                   | Grief and horror verging on the post-apocalyptic  |
| Author | <b>Hiroko Takenishi</b> | Hiroko Takenishi was born to an upper-class family in Hiroshima. Her childhood was fairly insulated from the consciousness of war. Takenishi was sixteen when the United States dropped on Hiroshima the first nuclear bomb to be used against an enemy population, thereby erasing most of the world she had known. As her story "The Rite" implies, an especially large number of schoolgirls were killed instantly that day.   |

Fiction

***The Rite***

Comparative Literature: T. S. Eliot  
"The Waste Land"  
Spiritual devastation wrought by war

Comparative Literature: Joseph Conrad  
*Heart of Darkness*  
The retelling of a story / traumatic events several years after the event occurred (recollections in tranquility or, a Lot's wife looking back?); both Aki and Marlow want to gain an idea of the impact their experiences outside the boundaries of human decency and decorum had on them. The fact that it is emotionally difficult to recall the events brings to mind that Conrad and Takenishi have doubts about the ability of human beings to emerge unscathed from trips that go too far into the interior.

Theme: Death and rites of death; guilt, shame, and alienation

Idea: Responses to overwhelming human crises; looking at events from the perspective of a different culture; how do different cultures approach / deal with death (especially when tragic, of horrific scope, and unexpected)?

**Unit Essay** E4. Please review the works in this unit and identify how and where they address themes of guilt, shame, and alienation. Discuss the way that some of the works depict fragmentation and eventual psychological / emotional breakdown.

**V**

**Finals**

16 Review, Annotated Bibliography, Research Paper

Final Essay FE1. In the works in this course, the tenets of Buddhism often figure into the actions and the attitudes of the protagonists. Identify three or four works of literature written in different eras and discuss the similarities and differences you find there. What do the works suggest about the human condition and the best way to deal with one's own humanity?

FE 2. Identify works in Japanese literature that incorporate nature, and discuss the way that the author uses elements of the landscape to explore the human condition and the nature of reality.

FE 3. Discuss the role of women in Japanese society, love, and amorous relationships. Include a discussion of marriage and the role of concubines.