14-2 Notes

* Nara period – during the AD 700s --- emperors gave important jobs to nobles from powerful families.
* Kyoto (first known as Heian) was the capital of Japan for more than 1000 years.
* During the AD 800s the emperors’ power declined because of weak emperors who were mainly children and too young to rule.
* Samurai – (means “to serve”) -- Japanese warriors who agreed to fight in private armies for nobles
* Bushido- a strict code of conduct that samurai lived by
* The Gempei War was a civil war between the two most powerful clans, the Taira family and the Minamoto family
* Yoritomo – leader of the Minamoto family—after winning the Gempei War, the emperor worried the Minamoto family would try to replace the Yamato family --- so he gave Yoritomo the title of shogun.
* Shogun – commander of all of the emperor’s military forces
* Shogunate – Japan’s military gov’t
* China’s Mongol emperor sent troops to invade Japan. The Mongols were defeated because typhoons, violent storms, smashed many of their ships. The Japanese named the typhoons kamikaze which means “divine wind”.
* A samurai, Ashikaga Takauji, turned against the emperor and made himself shogun. A new gov’t began, but was weak and the empire divided into small territories.
* Powerful military lords known as daimyo headed the new territories.
* To protect their lands, daimyo created private armies made up of samurai who pledged loyalty to his daimyo who in return gave the samurai land – these samurai were called vassals.
* The bond of loyalty between a lord (daimyo) and his vassal is known as feudalism.