

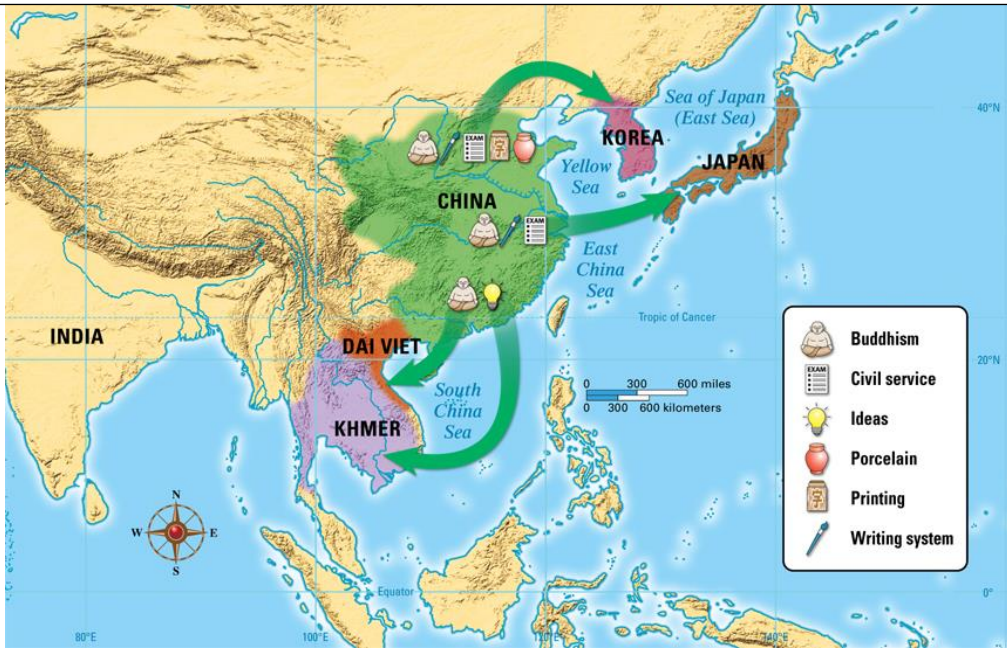
Chinese Influence on Japan: Writing

Name: _____

Period: ____ Date: _____

China played an influential role in the development of South East Asia. Japan is one of the nations that benefitted greatly from the cultural and technological advancements that spread from China to its neighbors from A.D. 600, on.

List the major ways in which the Chinese culture influenced Japan according to this map:



Which of the above influences do you think was the most important to, or had the biggest impact upon Japanese society? Explain your answer.

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When contact was first established between Japan and China, there was no written form of the Japanese language. It is believed that in A.D.285, the arrival of two important books helped to change that. *The Analects*, which are the teachings of Confucius and his students, and *1000 Character Classic*, a dictionary of sorts that served as a practice book for writing characters and establishing pronunciation. Of the 1000 important Chinese words a student should know included in this dictionary, one-tenth, or about 100 of them, were Confucian terms.

So as the Japanese were learning to write, they were also learning morality from the teachings of Confucius. Their native religion, Shinto did not provide the Japanese with a moral code. So, as they were introduced to new words, they had to grapple with concepts that were new to them as well, like “humaneness,” “honesty,” “rectitude,” “familial piety,” etc. – as they began to learn these words, and what they meant, they were learning about who they were and who they wanted to become. A moral standard was being adopted.

Which two books that came from China changed the course of Japanese history ... and why?

What surprising thing happened as the Japanese started to learn to write using the Chinese dictionary?

Can you explain the concept of “humaneness” or “rectitude” ... what about “familial piety”? Give one a try – you’ll probably find that to explain a term more than just definitions are required, examples will be needed ...