**Japanese Vocabulary**

Terms Definitions

Ainu the earliest inhabitants of Japan, indigenous (native) to the area

Amaterasu the sun goddess in Japanese tradition

archipelago a related group, or chain, of islands

bonsai regular trees grown to be miniature

bushido code of conduct for samurai

clan family group that traces its ancestry to a common ancestor

daimyo Japanese feudal lord who commanded private army of samurai

kami spirits that early Japanese believed controlled forces of nature

monsoons strong winds that affect the climate of Japan

Nippon term for Japan meaning “land of the rising sun”

Ring of Fire area that encircles the Pacific Ocean that is prone to earthquakes

samurai warrior in the Japanese feudal era

seppuku act of suicide practiced by nobles and samurai during the Japanese feudal era; practiced to save one’s honor or regain it in face of shame

Shinto religion native to Japan with an emphasis on nature

shogun head of military government of Japan in the Japanese feudal era

Tale of Genjii first book written in Japan

terrace type of farming; step cut into hillsides to make level land

typhoon hurricane in east Asia

tsunami huge wave caused by an earthquake

Yamato first and only Japanese dynasty; established in 400 AD