



NCTA Class App The Constitution at 70. Parts One and Two Classroom Lessons and Resources

The following resources can be used to supplement Professor Ethan Segal's two-part Class App presentation on the Constitution at 70 for a classroom unit of instruction.

Teaching Japan's Current Constitutional Reform Campaign:

- Landeck, Melinda, trans. [*The Honobono Family Asks: What Are Constitutional Revisions?*](#) This *manga*, or comic book, is a powerful primary source document to help students consider (a) the constitutional changes that Japan's LDP Party and the Abe government would like to adopt and (b) the persuasive strategies used to convince the Japanese people to support these changes.
 - Have students analyze the comic (or sections of it) in terms of what the story is "selling." What strategies does it use to appeal to its audience? Have students note (1) specific techniques, (2) selling points, and (3) specific issues about the constitution and its relationship to Japanese life and society. Use these as a basis of class discussion.
 - Provide students with a copy of Japan's 1947 Constitution and have them identify specific sections of the constitution that are addressed in this *manga* (comic book).
 - Assign students to do online research to learn about and report on popular responses to the planned constitutional reforms.
- Jones, Colin P.A. "[LDP's Comic Appeal for Constitutional Change Falls Flat](#)." *The Japan Times*. July 2015.
<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/community/2015/07/15/issues/ldps-comic-appeal-constitutional-change-falls-flat/#.V9g2QzXZBrY>. This article offers a detailed analysis of the LDP pro-constitutional change persuasive manga noted above—*The Honobono Family Asks: What Are Constitutional Revisions?*

Teaching about the Origins of Japan's 1947 "MacArthur" Constitution:

- About Japan Editors. "[About Japan: The Occupation of Japan and Democratic Reform](#)." The Japan Society, n.d. Essay providing background

and context on the U.S. Occupation of Japan and its goals for democratic reform.

- Asia for Educators. The Constitution of Japan 1947. Primary Source Document with Questions. East Asia for Educators, Columbia University. http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/japan/constitution_1947.pdf. This file provides excerpts of Japan's 1947 Constitution with two sets of DBQ-type questions, one set focusing specifically on Article 9, the "no war" clause, and the other focusing on the origins of the document and its acceptance in Japan during the Occupation.
- Krauth, Kathleen, and Lynn Parisi. "[Embracing Democracy: Popularizing Democratic Values Lesson Plan.](#)" In **Lynn Parisi, et. al. *Japan 1945-1989: Recreating a Modern Nation*. Boulder, Social Science Education Consortium, 2002.** This multi-part lesson plan includes activities that focus on using primary source posters designed to educate the Japanese population about their new constitution in 1947, a children's story designed to promote acceptance of the 1947 Constitution, and analysis of sections of the 1947 Constitution.
- *Making the Japanese Constitution: Colonel Charles Kades Interviewed by John Haley, University of Washington.* Posted May 2002; interview May 23, 1989. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnzOU4sf3Ms>. Kades, one of the American authors of the 1947 Constitution, discusses the process of writing and mediating the acceptance of the constitution. Kades argues that the Japanese had more input into the document than is commonly known.
- *The 1947 New Japanese Constitution.* Posted March 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMbKZen7_UQ. Ten-minute video presenting basics of the U.S.-directed 1947 constitution, with interviews with chief American architects of the document.
- *The Only Woman in the Room: Beate Sirota Gordon.* Posted August 2007; recorded April 5, 2007. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TceZiTgyZXI>. Gordon discusses her role as a young woman on MacArthur's SCAP staff selected as the architect of the equal rights clause in Japan's 1947 Constitution.
- Andrew L. Oros. "[The Domestic and International Politics of Constitutional Change in Japan.](#)" *Education About Asia*. Vol. 12, No. 3. Winter 2007. Oros places the efforts to change Article 9 in the context of history and the realities of 21st-century security.
- Peter Frost. "[Japan's Peace Constitution](#)" and Richard Minear. "[Two Essays on Japan's Peace Constitution.](#)" *Education About Asia*. Vol.11, No.1. Spring **2007**. These two articles consider ways to use the DVD

Japan's Peace Constitution (Icarus Films, 2005) in the classroom. Even without access to the film, the reviewers provide useful strategies for teaching about Article 9.

Additional Online Resources:

- Chen, Emily S. "The Surrender of Japan's Peace Constitution." *Project Syndicate*. April 2016. <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/japan-peace-constitution-amendment-by-emily-s--chen-2016-04?barrier=true>. Chen describes the contrast in new Abe military laws with popular opinion polls.
- Smith, Sheila. Reinterpreting Japan's Constitution. *Asia Unbound* (blog). July 2014. <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/2014/07/02/reinterpreting-japans-constitution/>. Smith, a specialist on U.S.-Japan relations at the Council on Foreign Relations, considers changes to the Japanese constitution from U.S. policy perspectives.
- Smith, Sheila, and Others. Will Japan Change Its Constitution? *Asia Unbound* (blog). August 2016 ongoing. <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/category/japan/will-japanese-change-their-constitution/>. This multi-essay blog series presents a range of perspectives, from policy specialists, to Japanese citizens, on the pros and cons of the proposed revisions to the 1947 Constitution and the likelihood that Abe's LDP majority can guide these changes to adoption in Japan.
- Teraoka, Ayumi Teraoka. Owning Our Constitution, Our Future. *Asia Unbound* (blog). August 2016. <http://blogs.cfr.org/asia/2016/08/22/owning-our-constitution-our-future/>. The author presents an overview of how diverse segments of Japanese society view the 1947 Constitution.