## Visualizing Japan (1850s-1930s): Westernization, Protest, Modernity

*A HarvardX / MITx MOOC (2026)*

# FAQ (VJx)

**What is the format of the class?**
The class consists of video lectures and roundtable discussions given by Professors John Dower, Andrew Gordon, Gennifer Weisenfeld, and Shigeru Miyagawa (see biographical information under **Team/Credits**).

**Is the course free?**
The MITx Online Platform features two **Enrollment Tracks,** which offer learners slightly different experiences:

• The **Audit Enrollment Track** is free, and all necessary materials will be provided. These students will not receive a certificate for completing the course, unless they upgrade to the certificate track before the deadline.

• The **Certificate Enrollment Track** offers paid access: these students can pass the course and earn a certificate.

Learn more in the **MITx Online Support Center** • If you haven't already, **upgrade to the Certificate Enrollment Track**

**What kind of assessments are there?**
There are two categories of graded assessments in this course, and several types of ungraded assessments. Graded assessments include comprehension questions and image-based analysis questions. Comprehension questions are either multiple-choice questions, which have one correct answer, or checkbox questions, which have two or more correct answers.

Image-based analyses will ask you to look closely at visual images and answer questions that follow. Some will require you to manipulate images directly, while others will ask you to answer multiple-choice questions.

Ungraded assessments include polls, discussion boards and image annotations, as well as large-scale gallery sort exercises. These assignments are open-ended, and ask you to submit a word or comment. While these are not required, these assignments allow you to engage with other students and will be moderated by a teaching fellow.

**How does grading work?**
Assessments in this course vary from simple multiple-choice questions, image-based analysis, and more open-ended assignments such as polls, word clouds, and discussion boards. Each module ends with a final quiz worth 8% of the final course score, and there is a final quiz worth 12% of the final score.

There are also many more questions appearing after videos, etc. in the 26 days of the course. Not all of these questions in each day are graded, but in general each question counts towards your score for that day. Each day counts for 1/25th of the remaining 64% of the course grade, so roughly 2.5% for each day's questions. Students on the Certificate Track will need to attain a course average of at least 60 percent to pass the course and receive a certificate.

**What do the blue clocks mean?**
Everything that is graded has a bue clock icon next to it. If the item also has a deadline, that is listed right below.

**How do I see the right answers?**
"Check" will submit your answer for points. If you're stumped you can click "show answer," but you will forfeit your points. If you click "show answer" before clicking "check," you will receive 0 points.

**Will the text of the lectures be available?**
Yes, a transcript is available alongside each lecture. If you don't see the transcript, you can toggle the transcripts on and off with this button, on the video toolbar: . You can jump to any part of the video by clicking on the transcript's text.

**What if I find the historical images and discussion of them challenging and/or in some way offensive?**
It is important to recognize that by showing certain images or discussing certain topics, we do not endorse the views or opinions they present. Rather, we seek to understand the complexity of the past, even when the past is distasteful or offensive to us in the present. This course does not reflect the views of Harvard University, MIT, HarvardX, MITx, EdX or MIT Visualizing Cultures.

**Are there MOOCs related to this one?**
MIT Visualizing Cultures has created three MITx courses based on the scholarly content on its website: **VJx, VPx, and VTx.** We encourage learners to take all three courses. **Visit these links for the courses' About Pages:**

**VJx ("Visualizing Japan (1850s-1930s): Westernization, Protest, Modernity")**. Examine Japanese history in a new way—through the images created by those who were there—and the skills and questions involved in reading history through images in the digital format. *Developed in collaboration with HarvardX and co-taught by MIT, Harvard, and Duke historians*.

**VPx ("Visualizing Imperialism & the Philippines, 1898-1913")**. Remarkable political cartoons and photography at the turn of the 20th century reveal debates over U.S. entry into global imperialism through the conquest and occupation of the Philippines. Historians tour this rich content drawn from MIT Visualizing Cultures.

**VTx ("Visualizing the Birth of Modern Tokyo").** See Tokyo's modernization through the "100 views" tradition, from the gas-lit 1870s to the jazz-era 1930s. *From MIT Visualizing Cultures, with the Smithsonian Institution*.

**What are the Standards of Academic Honesty?**
You are expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty laid out in the **MITx Online Honor Code** and the **MITx Online Terms of Service** "Rules for Online Conduct." Please pay attention to this excerpt from the Honor Code:

***YOU ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FROM POSTING THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CONTENT ON THE SITE:***

- *Content that defames, harasses, or threatens others;*
- *Content that discusses illegal activities with the intent to commit them;*
- *Content that infringes another's intellectual property, including, but not limited to, copyrights or trademarks;*
- *Profane, pornographic, obscene, indecent, or unlawful content;*
- *Advertising or any form of commercial solicitation;*
- *Content related to partisan political activities;*
- *Viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time bombs, corrupted files, malware, spyware, or any other similar software that may damage the operation of another's computer or property;*
- *and Content that contains intentionally inaccurate information or that is posted with the intent of misleading others.*

**What if I still have questions?**

Please visit the **MITx Online Support Center.**

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