



Frederick A.O. Schwarz Children's Center

# MCNY Investigations

## SAMURAI IN NEW YORK: *The First Japanese Delegation, 1860*

Self-guided worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Today you will explore the exhibition SAMURAI IN NEW YORK: The First Japanese Delegation, 1860 and view objects, photographs, and writings that commemorate this historic event.***

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This exhibition marks the anniversary of the landmark treaty that opened Japanese seaports to American business and trade. The signed treaty was hand-delivered in 1860 by Japanese representatives who were taken on a nine-month tour of the “Western World.” This exhibition chronicles their two-week stay in New York City, during which New Yorkers honored their 76 Japanese guests with parades, banquets, official tours of the city, and much fanfare.

1. Find the map that shows the route taken by the Japanese as they traveled to New York. What type of transportation did they use? What other cities did they visit?

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2. Walk behind the wooden introductory panels, towards the patio doors. Find the quote in large letters on the wall from *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly*, dated May 26, 1860. How does this quote characterize the country of Japan? How does it describe America?

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3. In the exhibition, find the section titled “**TOMMY AND SOMO KATO.**” Who was “Tommy?” What was his role during this visit?

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The following poem, or haiku, was written by Somo Kato during his visit to New York:

*sakuru hodo kuruma no oto mo atsusa kana*

**Hot steam  
the bursting sound of locomotive  
like thunder**

4. Somo Kato used poems and drawings to record his experiences in America and the new customs and technologies he encountered. What do you think the above poem describes and why?

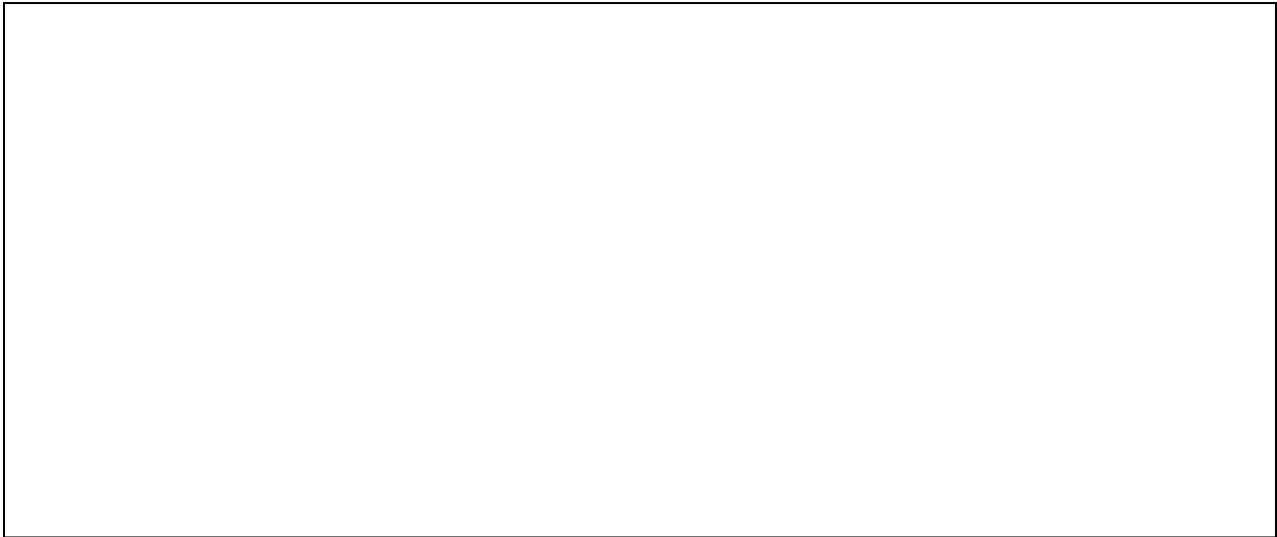
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5. Somo Kato brought many keepsakes and souvenirs home to Japan to share his American experience with his countrymen. Find an American item that was brought back to Japan and either draw or describe it in the space below.



6. Next, find the section titled “**SAMURAI IN NEW YORK.**” Two flags that decorated the Metropolitan Hotel during the delegation’s visit are on display. What countries do these flags represent? What do you notice about the American flag?

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7. On the opposite wall, find the newspaper articles that describe the delegation's visit to the sugar and glue factories. Why do you think the Japanese were interested in visiting those?

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8. In the final section, titled "LEGAGY," is a metal screw that was taken home to Japan by a member of the delegation as a souvenir. How does this object illustrate Western technology?

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9. Finally, find the photograph of two Japanese women wrapped in an American and Japanese flag. This photo was taken in the year 1900, forty years after the Japanese delegation's visit. What do you think its message is?

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10. Reflect on Japanese and American relations today. Brainstorm examples of how these countries share their culture and customs with one another today. Write your examples in the boxes below.

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**Examples of Japanese  
influence in America**

**Examples of American  
influence in Japan**

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