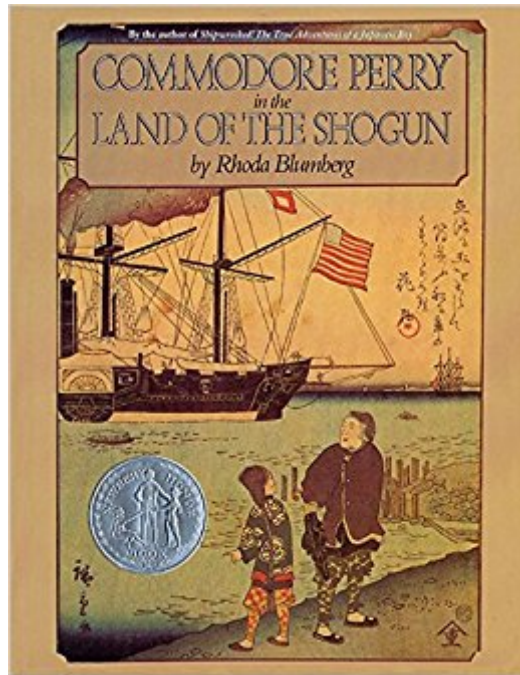


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# Commodore Perry In The Land Of The Shogun



## Synopsis

In 1853, few Japanese people knew that a country called America even existed. For centuries, Japan had isolated itself from the outside world by refusing to trade with other countries and even refusing to help shipwrecked sailors, foreign or Japanese. The country's people still lived under a feudal system like that of Europe in the Middle Ages. But everything began to change when American Commodore Perry and his troops sailed to the Land of the Rising Sun, bringing with them new science and technology, and a new way of life.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up  
Blumberg's book succeeds on two levels. First it is a well-written story of Matthew Perry's expedition to open Japan to American trade and whaling ports. The account is sensitive to the extreme cultural differences that both the Japanese and Americans had to overcome. Especially good are the chapters and paragraphs explaining Japanese feudal society and culture. The text is marvelously complemented by the illustrations, almost all reproductions of contemporary Japanese art, underscoring the unbiased approach of the book. On the second level, the book is a well-researched chronicle of the events of the trip. Blumberg has gone to the original sources to capture the sights, emotions, reactions and even tastes of both the Japanese and Americans. Yet

she has not neglected the political and economic importance or mission of Perry's trip. The notes, appendixes and bibliography show a carefully thought out book which holds valuable information for sophisticated readers. There is no better book for students on this historical event. John Buschman, Solanco Senior High School Library, Quarryville, Pa. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Rhoda Blumberg has written about the opening of Japan (1853-1854) in *Commodore Perry in the Land of the Shogun*, a Newbery Honor Book, which also won the Boston Globe/Horn Book Award and the Golden Kite Award. Her acclaimed histories also include *The Incredible Journey of Lewis & Clark*, *The Great American Gold Rush*, and *The Remarkable Voyages of Captain Cook*, all ALA Notable Books. She is the winner of the Washington Post/Children's Book Guild Award for her overall contribution to nonfiction. Rhoda Blumberg says that while doing research for *Commodore Perry*, "I read about the ordeals and strange adventures of Manjiro, then spent years replaying his life story in my mind until I felt impelled to write about him." The author and her husband, Gerald, live in Yorktown Heights, New York.

We purchased this book because it was required reading for my rising 6th grader. He is a very good reader and could read this book. However, it is non-fiction. He loves fiction and wasn't really motivated to read this. We read this together- taking turns reading pages. We quickly got into the story. Unlike some non-fiction, this book is a story. We both learned so many things about Commodore Perry and his expedition to the Land of the Shogun, Japan. We both thoroughly enjoyed the story. It has many pictures which added greatly to the story. The pictures are drawings by the parties involved in this expedition- the Japanese and the Americans. The drawings are a fascinating part of the story as you get to see how people are viewed by the different cultures. The story also is told from the different perspectives- from the Japanese and the American perspectives. Thus, we can understand why the Japanese were not interested in trading with foreigners. Certainly this topic is relevant to some of our problems today. Our fear of foreigners is certainly causing controversy in modern times in the US. Maybe we can learn a lesson? This book is not political though and does not give a "message". It is a very good, well balanced story that leaves it to the reader to make their own conclusions. Either way, it's an excellent book. I highly recommend it for ages 9-14. You may want to read it with your child unless they love non-fiction -especially for younger ones. My child read it with me at age 11 so any 9 year old readers would need to be gifted readers or very interested in this topic (historical non-fiction) in my judgement.

I am waiting for my 8-1/2 year old grandson to tell me how he likes it, after we get the companion volume "Shipwrecked."

This book is written for upper elementary or middle school students, but appeals to a much broader range. I bought this book to read for myself and also to read with my 3rd grade son. The book is interesting and has a good pace. Interesting pictures are included that help catch the attention of younger readers. I think this book is a good choice for teaching children history.

I considered this selection because it was recommended by . It gave me background info on my favorite book, Shogun and it told the story of Commodore Perry very well with great pictures, comics and insight from Japan, at that time.

Informative and well written, a desired addition to my Newbery Collections.

got my book today i can't wait to read it and learn about history and about japan yes awesome o

This book is exactly what I was looking for, something that would drop me right back into those early days of contact between Japan and the USA, so I could sense the cultural differences, the political environment, and something of the surprise involved in that kind of cultural exchange. I didn't expect to get all that and more, but I did. School Library Journal is quoted as saying "there is no better book for students on this historical event" -- I would say students of all ages who want this kind of concise but comprehensive introduction to the events portrayed. And it is beautifully produced. A treasure for my bookshelf, not just one fast read.

My 11 year old was fascinated with the depictions and original art introducing the reader to Westerners' first experiences in Japan.

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