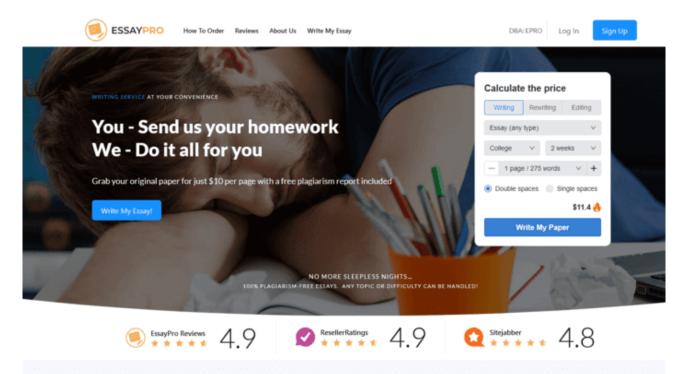
## Meiji Restoration - Japan



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## Meiji Restoration - Japan

The Meiji Restoration was period in Japan when massive changes in ancient Japan. The goal of the Meiji Restoration was summarized in their motto, "A rich country, a strong military." In their quest to do so, the Meiji looked to the western civilizations. The Meiji sent young men to study abroad and learn new traits from the west. Before this drastic move the traditional Japanese society was largely isolated from all other civilizations. By doing this the Japanese managed to strengthen the economy, strengthen the government, and make social reforms.

Meiji leaders made the economy a major priority. They encouraged <u>Japan</u>'s business class to adopt western methods. They Japanese built railroads to allow the shipment of goods and transportation of people, a banking system to aid in the expansion of businesses and investors, improved ports to aid in the expansion of trade with other countries, and also organized a telegraph and postal system which enables the spread of news quickly.

Another goal of the Meiji was to strengthen the government and make it a strong central power, equal to those of the western powers. In 1889 they adapted the German for of

government. It set forth principles that all citizens were equal before the law. Like the German system, however, it gave the ruler autocratic power. A legislature, or diet, was formed, made up of one elected house and one house appointed to the emperor. But its power was extremely limited. Japan then established a western style bureaucracy with separate departments to supervise finance, the army, the navy, and education.

Meiji made social reforms to help appease the people and advance their society. The constitution ended legal distinctions between classes, thus freeing people to build the nation. The government set up new schools and universities and hired westerners to teach the new generation modern technology. The reform of the Japanese family system became the topic of major debate in the 1870's Reformers wanted women to become full partners in the process of nation building and to learn skills that would allow them to live on their own. While the government agreed to some increases in education for women, it dealt harshly with other attempts at change.

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