

The Rebirth of the Rising Sun: The Leadership of Emperor Hirohito

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Individual Website

Student Composed Words: 1200

Process Paper: 495 words

## Process Paper

The idea for my 2015 National History Day topic derived from my affinity and love for Japanese language and culture. I definitely wanted to do something about Japan's history. My Japanese sensei (Japanese language teacher), had talked about the current Japanese emperor in class and the influence he has over the people of Japan today, and I started wondering why...why do they regard him/the royal family so highly? I wanted to know more, so I started researching their royal family; this quickly lead me to the interesting topic of Emperor Hirohito, the current Emperor's father.

For research, I used a variety of sources. I used books, DVDs, as well as an interview via e-mail with a man who survived the atomic bomb explosion at Nagasaki named Minoru Maeda, who still lives in Japan. This was my favorite source. I wanted to make my project special; one day I was talking to my Japanese teacher about my project and a conversation struck up and he refered me to his friend in Japan. I then wrote him a email with ten questions and he wrote me back with ten pages! I was honored. I used this information as evidence as well as to shape my ideas. It was really amazing to have the experiance to connect with an atomic bomb survivor and be able to ask him questions. I also went to many public libraries. My National History Day teacher helped me find books and DVDs that provide information on General MacArthur's endeavors to investigate if Emperor Hirohito was guilty of war crimes at the conclusion of World War II.

My project relates to the National History Day theme "Leadership and Legacy" because my project exhibits, under the leadership of Hirohito, Japan was able to recover after the devastation of WWII. It also shows that Emperor Hirohito, when he was given the chance, left a positive legacy on his country, and helped rebuild a strong Japanese identity.

I constructed my website by finding pictures that helped prove my thesis and I had to formulate my thesis down to 1200 words. I also used quotes to prove my thesis. From this I learned to make a website on the website maker weebly which is a good skill to have in a technology growing world.

My understanding of the topic has changed since I first started researching it. For example: I understood that Hirohito was the emperor, but I did not know he was just a figurehead for the time leading up to the war and the war actually shifted political power to him. Now I understand that under Hirohito's leadership, Japan was able to recover, and that is why the royal family is so highly regarded today and such as integral part of Japanese society Emperor Hirohito, when he was given the chance to show what he could really do, left a legacy on Japan that showcased in the pride his people feel today.