

## Introduction

Technology has allowed humans to communicate in many different ways. When postcard standards were internationalized, this mode of communication was used worldwide and most prominently in the Russo-Japanese War. In this Sitequest, students will consider the various narratives that postcards established during the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War.

## Task

Your task is to identify patterns of communication through the postcards of the Russo-Japanese War. What was being communicated to viewers? After the individuals in your group identify patterns related to their themes, you will synthesize and present that information in a group PowerPoint presentation.

## Process

Each student in your group has been assigned a different theme related to postcards of the Russo-Japanese War. The themes are:

Technology

The Military

Leaders

The Enemy

On The Homefront

1. Before you explore the visual database of postcards, consider the theme you have been assigned. Make notes on what you expect to find in Japanese postcards relating to this theme during the Japan's first major war against a Western power. What kinds of images do you expect to find relating to this theme in a country at war?

2. [Explore the database](#) for your theme. Make sure you are examining Japanese-produced postcards. Give yourself at least 20-30 minutes to explore postcards related to the theme you have been assigned.

3. Examine the postcards relating to your theme more closely and look for patterns in content and style. Give yourself 30 minutes. Consider the following questions in your search for patterns:

What is being portrayed in connection with this theme?

What main message(s) or idea(s) is conveyed through these selected postcards?

How is this message conveyed? What stylistic conventions are used?

If you were a citizen of Japan alive in 1904, 1905, and 1906 and you viewed these postcards, what would you learn?

Write your identified messages/ideas/patterns here:

4. Now go back and look again at the postcards in the database. Are the patterns/ideas/messages you came up with in Step #3 evident in most of the postcards with this theme? If not, you need to go back to Step #3.
5. Choose the two postcards related to your assigned theme that best exemplify what you have written as the main message or pattern.
6. Present your theme, main message, and two postcards to the group.
7. As a group put your patterns together. What statements can you make about what postcards were communicating on these five themes in Japan and other places around the world? In your PowerPoint you must answer the question:  
**What was being communicated and how was it being communicated?**
8. Create a PowerPoint with your selected postcards and present it to your entire class.

### **Conclusion**

You have just learned that people acquire knowledge not just through written texts, but also through visuals. Although we may be unconscious of our acquisition of knowledge through visual means, it happens nonetheless. Make sure to keep this in mind as you encounter the thousands of visuals in your life everyday. What are you learning?