4.4 Japan’s Rise to Power
ATROCITY

An extremely cruel or wicked act, typically one involving physical violence or injury
Background

• 1920s: Japan became more democratic
• Parliamentary system had grown weak
Militarists take control of Japan

- Many Japanese blame government for Great Depression
  - Military leaders gain support
- Keep Emperor Hirohito as head of state
- Japan planned to create an empire by conquering China
Japan Invades Manchuria

- 1931: Japanese military seizes Manchuria despite objections from Japanese parliament
- Army set up a puppet government
- Japan ignored the protests of the League of Nations
Japan Invades China

• 1937: Japan invades China after a border incident
  • China is no match for Japan
  • Cities fall to Japan, including Nanking, the capitol
• During the Rape of Nanking, around 300,000 soldiers and civilians were murdered by the Japanese
“Japanese troops killed tens of thousands of captured soldiers and civilians in Nanjing.”
Central Question

What *happened* during the Japanese invasion of Nanking?
With a partner, read each document and answer the following questions:

1. Which textbook do you think comes from Japan? Which textbook comes from China? How do you know? What specific parts of each text helped you make your decision?

2. After reading documents A and B, can you accurately answer what happened during the invasion of Nanking? Why or why not?

3. Which of these textbooks, if either, do you find more trustworthy? Why?

4. Where else would you look in order to figure out what happened during the Japanese invasion of Nanking?
With a partner, read the document and answer the following questions:

1. What type of document is this? What is the purpose of this type of document?

2. Is Spence a reliable source? Why or why not?

3. List 2-3 ways that Spence’s account compares or contrasts with the Japanese textbook.

4. List 2-3 ways that Spence’s account compares or contrasts with the Chinese textbook.
Pair-Share

Discuss the following questions with your partner and be prepared to share out.

1. Why might textbooks from different countries offer different versions of the same historical events?

2. When confronted with conflicting historical accounts, what is the best way to determine which is more accurate or trustworthy?