MLO2: Japanese Literature

**2.1**: I definitely came to appreciate and became very knowledgeable in Japanese culture in this class. Professor Ogaki showed a wide range of Japanese culture through Haiku. She conveyed many famous poetic authors to us that showed different and similar values, attitudes, and ideas. Some Haikus spoke deeply about nature, history in Japan, Japanese society, family life, and life in general. The value of Haiku symbolized art and life appreciation. Professor showed us Japanese Haikus and also American Haikus. People write Haikus for a variety of reasons. Many form Haikus as a depression reliever, a hobby, historical and cultural awareness, or about sadness and destruction. Haikus can be sad and happy. The class and I, together, translated different Japanese Haikus to answer questions and make discussions. With Haikus, I realized that words are not always literal and words can have a completely different meaning. To me, some Japanese Haiku artists were more difficult to understand than others. Understanding the depth of poetry is not my strong suite so I’m glad that Professor Ogaki planned this course to be visual and group oriented. Not only did she assist me with comprehending Haikus, she gave the class and I the necessary tools to research ways of grasping Haikus independently.

**2.2:** The Japanese Literature course included critical and analytical thinking. Analyzing professional Haikus helped me with creating my own Haikus. Many Haikus, Professor Ogaki showed me, was about Japanese modern society and how history made Japanese society today. Therefore, my Haikus were about the tragedies and the downs of society such as crime and gang activity. Between the American Haikus and Japanese Haikus, I was able to discover the differences and celebrities between Japanese society and American society. Japan and America fought so many battles but results of how society overcomes these obstacles are different. I was able to determine this through Japanese poetry because the authors were extremely creative. Of course, I am not as creative as the famous Haiku authors such as Matsuo Bashoo and Masao Fujimara but, I was able to show the class my Haikus about American culture. Another way Professor Ogaki taught us of Japanese culture by having the class read Japanese literature out loud to say the pronunciations and speech rhythm correctly. Repetition helped me really understand what was being said in the literature. Japanese culture influences modern Japanese life. I read old Japanese literature and new Japanese literature. The present literature had some similar ideas as the older literature.