Genroku era (1688 - 1703)
- golden age of Japanese art
- popular culture established and flourished
- New art forms such as kabuki and ukiyo-e became very popular mainly between the townspeople.

Kabuki
- Its first formally recognized show happened during the Edo period (1603)
- Started by a Shinto priestess named Izumo no Okuni and her troupe of female dancers to raise money for Izumo Taisha shrine
- roots in drama, music and dance that can be traced back to the eight century
• Great Fire of Meireki (1657) - turning point in urban design

• The government built stone embankments in at least two locations along rivers in the city – reduce spread of fire but were eventually replaced with どぞう (earthen storehouses) and anagura (storage holes)

• valuable articles that could not be carried during a fire are placed in どぞう and anagura
• Earthen *Dōzō* kura (storehouse)
  - for fire breaks and to store goods unloaded from the canals
  - mostly built and used by merchants
  - structural frame: timber coated with a number of layers of earthen plaster on the walls, door and roof
  - *bunkogura*
- Specially fortified *dozō* for storing documents
- never gained popularity due to their higher construction cost
• Sankin kōtai
- the law requiring the daimyōs to maintain dwellings in the capital
- repealed during the very late part of the period

- result: a) decrease in population in Edo
  b) commensurate reduction in income for the shogunate