

China Lesson Plan

**English Language Arts/Social Studies Lesson Plan by Diana Carr, Elgin High School, Marion, OH**

**Topic:**

*Tao Te Ching*

**Grade Levels:**

High School

**Time:**

Three 50-minute class periods

**Common Core Standards:**

Literacy in Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading:

**Key Ideas & Details: 2.** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

**Craft and Structure Grades 9 & 10:**

**6.** Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

Writing Standards:

**Production and Distribution of Writing: Grades 9 & 10:**

**4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

**5.** Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10 on page 55.)

**Learning Targets:**

Students should be able to interpret a poem from *Tao Te Ching*. Students should be able to express their viewpoint of the poem through writing their own poem based on one from *Tao Te Ching*.

**Relevance/Rationale:**

This is relevant to today's students because students need to be able to take unfamiliar text and understand it and apply it to their lives. Students will need to be able to express their opinions and deductions in both written and verbal expression, regardless of what job they may hold in the future. Students also need to be able to work cooperatively with others.

**Formative Assessment:**

1. Write a "modern" poem based on one of the poems from *Tao Te Ching*.
2. Create a living photograph with another student.
3. Question(s) on the unit assessment

**Prior Knowledge:**

1. Students have read and discussed some of the poems from *Tao Te Ching*.
2. Students have experience working cooperatively in class.

**Activities/Tasks:**

DAY ONE:

1. Ask students to take out a piece of notebook paper and a writing utensil. If computers are available, students could use a word processing program on a computer instead.
2. Distribute a poem from *Tao Te Ching* at random to each student.
3. Ask students to silently read the poem they received.
4. Ask students to highlight or underline what they consider to be the most important line in the poem they were given.
5. Ask students to highlight or underline what they consider to be the most important word in the poem they were given. Have students use a different color if possible.
6. Ask students to write their own poem, basing it on the theme or the underlined/highlighted lines the student just made on their paper.

7. Tell students that this will be considered a rough draft and is due at the end of the class period. If handwritten, collect these from the students. If on a computer, students could print them out and turn them in OR could email them to the teacher as an attachment.

DAY TWO:

1. Return the rough draft poems from yesterday to the students.
2. Ask students to read their poem again today and make any revisions and edits to make this a final poem. Students should ask at least two (2) other students in the room to peer review their poem.
3. Collect the final poem from each student.
4. Assign each student a group of three or four and ask them to move to sit together somewhere in the classroom.
5. Give each group one of the poems from *Tao Te Ching*.
6. Ask students to read the poem aloud and discuss what the poem means to each of them. Ask students to make some notes in the margins of the poem handout.
7. Ask students to think about how the meaning or theme of the poem could be shown to the class as a "living photograph." A living photograph is where students pose or freeze in a pose representing what they have read, just as if a photograph of the activity was taken by a camera. Students will do their living photograph and explanations for the class tomorrow.
8. Criteria for the living photograph is: (1) Students both participated in the living photograph in front of the class. (2) Students both spoke to explain what their living photograph represented and why they decided to do what they did. (3) Students worked cooperatively together on the task. (4) A member of the group read their *Tao Te Ching* poem to the class.

DAY THREE:

1. Set up the classroom so there is a performance area to act out the living photographs.
2. Ask for volunteer groups to go first. Remind the class what the criteria is that you are looking for.
3. I use post it notes to write comments for each group presenting, and then place these on the students' poem when they turn it in at the end of each living photograph.
4. At the end of each living photograph, ask the class for their thoughts on the living photograph and the poem.
5. Remind students that the *Tao Te Ching* is important to the history of East Asia and the information learned can be used in their world history or geography classes, also.

**Resources/Materials:**

Teacher:

1. Classroom set of *Tao Te Ching* or one photocopy of the poems
  - \* need enough copies for each student to have a poem
  - \* need enough copies for each group to have a poem not done as individuals
2. Area big enough to do living photographs

Student:

1. Writing utensil
2. Highlighter or colored pencils
3. Area for the group to work in
4. Handouts from the teacher OR a book

**Access for All:**

All students should have access to this lesson.

**Modifications/Accommodations:**

Gifted/Advanced:

1. Have students write a story based on the poem they received
2. Have students do a research multi-media project based on *Tao Te Ching*

English Language Learners & Below Grade Level Students:

1. Assign the individual poem as a partner or small group project.
2. Or, give extended time on the assignment.

To Reduce the Time for the Lesson:

1. Do either the student poem or the living photograph

**Lesson Reflection:**