

The Western Experience in China: 20th Century Witnesses

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Teaching about Asia, spring 2012

Grade level: 7 – 12th

Time: 5-6 days, 40 minute periods

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to help students to understand the role of cultural and historical interpreters in our understanding of the history of China, to sensitize them to the necessity of increasing their own cultural and linguistic understanding of Asia, to develop their understanding of 20th century Chinese history, and to encourage their own future exploration of Asia.

This project is being created for my Chinese classes but can be used as part of a Social Studies or Language Arts curriculum as well.

Ohio Academic Content Standards: Social Studies

Modern World History

Topic: *Imperialism (1800-1914)*

The industrialized nations embarked upon a competition for overseas empires that had profound implications for the entire world. This “new imperialism” focused on the underdeveloped world and led to the domination and exploitation of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Content Statements:

10. Imperial expansion had political, economic and social roots.
11. Imperialism involved land acquisition, extraction of raw materials, **spread of Western values** and direct political control.
12. The consequences of imperialism were viewed differently by the colonizers and the colonized.

Topic: *Achievements and Crises (1900-1945)*

The first half of the 20th century was one of rapid technological advances. It was a period when the tensions between industrialized nations resulted in World War I and set the stage for World War II. While World War II transformed the balance of world power, it was the most destructive and costly war in terms of human casualties and material resources expended.

Content Statements:

13. Advances in technology, communication and transportation improved lives, but also had negative consequences.
16. Oppression and discrimination resulted in the Armenian Genocide during World War I and the Holocaust, the state-sponsored mass murder of Jews and other groups, during World War II. (*see Abraham Kaufman from list*)
17. World War II devastated most of Europe and Asia, led to the occupation of Eastern Europe and Japan, and began the atomic age.

Procedures and Activities: In this theme based project, students will be assigned to research one person who lived in China and whose work and worldview were affected by their experience.

Students will:

- contribute to a timeline wall poster showing what major events their individual might have experienced
- contribute one page to a class notebook of biographies that they will compile
- upload one video resource or webpage about their person to a Ning class webpage
- make a short presentation introducing their person and the resource uploaded
- complete a journal writing exercise in which they imagine one week in the life of this person

Day 1: Teacher introduces purpose, requirements, and procedures of the project. It might be useful to use a YouTube video about one of the people to set the stage and give an example of the kind of material to be uploaded. Assign the characters and give students worksheet so they can start at home if they want to. See examples under “Resources.”

List of characters (in no particular order):

William H. Hinton	Joan Hinton	Carma Hinton
Jan Wong	Norman Bethune	Robert Morrison
James Hudson Taylor	Anna Louise Strong	Sidney Shapiro
Gladys Yang	Rewi Alley	Agnes Smedley
J.G. Ballard	Nicholas Kristoff	Cheryl WuDunn
Mary Ann Aldersey	Kris Phillips (Fei Xiang)	Mark Salzman
Pearl Buck	Mark Rosewell (Da Shan)	George Bush Sr.
George Stillwell	Reginald Johnston	Joseph Needham
Nichole Mones	Edgar Snow	Harrison Salisbury
Tani Barlow	Judith Shapiro	Israel Epstein
Abigail Washburn	Ida Pruitt	Abraham Kaufman

Day 2: Guided research in computer lab.

Students can be given an information gathering worksheet to collect the details they need to learn about their assigned “cultural interpreter” and collect the pieces they need for their group presentation. If incomplete, assign as homework.

Day 3: Sharing what we've learned.

Make sure the timeline is on the wall. Students begin posting their people on the timeline according to when they lived in China. At the same time, students work in small groups to present their research to each other. A short information gathering half sheet should be given to students to fill out with 3-5 spaces for the people researched. Students can gather the following information:

- name
- approximate time period in China
- purpose of being in China

While students are doing this, the teacher hands out or posts the order of presentations in chronological order. If extra time, students can work on their journals or biographies.

Day 4: Presentations

Students briefly present their characters, what they were doing in China, and their impressions of how that affected their lives (careers, personally, life choices). Students also show their Ning page contribution (depending on the size of the class and time, the teacher should decide how much of the resource to show). Biographies should be placed in the binder after each presentation. Teacher can decide whether to have students write a biography or just use the information gathering sheet for this.

Day 5: Presentations continued.

If finish early, students can work on journal entries.

Day 6: Wrap Up

Finish any unfinished presentations. Class discussion of what was learned, what students found interesting and/or surprising, how the experiences of these people reflect the time period they were in China, and who they would most like to meet if they could. Students then use the rest of the period to work on journal entries, due tomorrow.

Assessment: The teacher can decide how to weigh each assignment based on grading standards and priorities of his/her class. Assignments that can be graded include:

- information gathering worksheet
- class webpage upload
- biography contribution – teacher should decide format based on student skills
- presentation
- journal writing

Resources:

- Ning or other similar webpage the class can use to upload their resource
- information gathering worksheet
- check sheet and guidelines for submission of work
- 3 ring binder for biographies
- computer equipment for research day
- videos: Mark Rosewell , Canadian <http://youtu.be/RiAslxavh4c>
Abigail Washburn, American <http://youtu.be/H6xOYsXyfT4> (check out the whole series)
- wall timeline, paper strips for posting, tape
- information gathering half sheets for interviews