

Brent Martin

Mount Vernon High School

Mao and the Great Leap Forward (10th Grade World History)

Ohio Standards Addressed:

Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities Standard

Benchmark A: Analyze ways people achieve governmental change, including political action, social protest and revolution.

2. Describe and compare opportunities for citizen participation under different systems of government including:

e. Dictatorships

Economics Standard

Benchmark A: Compare how different economic systems answer the fundamental economic questions of what goods and services to produce, how to produce them, and who will consume them.

2. Explain how changing methods of production and a country's productive resources affect how it answers the fundamental economic questions of what to produce, how to produce, and for whom to produce.

3. Analyze characteristics of traditional, market, command and mixed economies with regard to:

- a. Private property;**
- b. Freedom of enterprise;**
- c. Competition and consumer choice;**
- d. The role of government.**

History Standard

Benchmark E: Analyze connections between World War II, the Cold War and contemporary conflicts.

d. The Chinese Communist Revolution.

Purpose: Students will be able to identify the Great Leap Forward in China, analyzing its effectiveness and consequences upon the civilian population.

Essential Questions:

- 1) Why did Mao institute the Great Leap Forward?**
- 2) What were the goals of the Great Leap Forward?**
- 3) What was the result of the policy?**

Rationale: This lesson identifies the policies of the People's Republic and compares them to shortcomings in Communist USSR earlier in the century.

Background: Students should be familiar with Mao's rise to power and the expulsion of the nationalists from mainland China. If not, take some time to review with students the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the banishment of Chiang Kai-Shek's followers.

Materials: *Great Leap: People's Century* (PBS) DVD, Copies of http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/great_leap_forward.htm reading, Copies of <http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/960314/china.shtml> (Primary Source from peasant)

Activities: Begin with a lecture outlining China and Mao's rise to power. Have them read the historylearningsite article up to "Consequences of Great Leap Forward" Have students identify goals of Great Leap Forward on board. In notes, have them describe what a commune was and what function it served. Ask students, if they foresee any problems with Great Leap Forward and jot ideas on board. Ask students how they would feel if they were a peasant and forced to leave land to work on a commune. Have students make predictions about results of Great Leap Forward.

Watch *People's Century* DVD. After watching have students answer:

1. As shown in the program, what conditions contributed to the communists' victory? How did the Chinese government try to change the lives of ordinary people and why?
2. Before communism, Chinese peasant Hu Benxu recalls, "There was justice for the rich but none for the poor...You can't believe how badly the poor were treated." Did the communists bring justice for the poor? Based on Qi Youyi's quotation, do you think he believes the actions he describes were just? Why or why not? Do you think that they were just? Why or why not?

(PBS.org website Teacher's Guide)

Distribute copies of University of Chicago article. After reading, have students pull out goals of Great Leap Forward notes. Have students read: "Consequences of Great Leap" article from historylearningsite website. Have them take out Goals of Great Leap notes and in adjacent column, find goal and right corresponding consequence or failure of idea. Compare notes as a class on board or overhead. Ask students, "Why did the Great Leap fail", or "What was the Great Leap like for peasant farmers? Who did it benefit?"

Assessments: Have students create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting Stalin's collectivization and five year plans to Mao's Great Leap Forward. Encourage them to consider economic, social, political consequences of both ideologies.

Grade Adaptations: For higher level or older students, after completing Venn Diagram, have them discuss why Communist ideals appeal to poor and why these collectivization programs are implemented. Discuss why communism fails in large countries, but why it is still appealing.