

4.3 Lesson Plan for China

Purpose: How can we bring together the best of eastern and western body / mind knowledge to support teens who live and learn with ADD/ADHD, anxiety, body image issues, sedentary lifestyles, and a lack of confidence? To introduce the history of Tai Chi, its elements of body and mind, as well as the language of body and mind, and to practice basic forms as a regular part of the school day is to work toward the answer.

Essential Questions

1. How can body movement support mental focus, alleviate anxiety, and build a sense of balance and confidence?
2. How do Eastern and Western medicine and health practices complement each other in daily life?
3. How can the practice of Tai Chi on a regular basis improve classroom performance and overall sense of well-being?

Content Standards

Target grade level is 8th grade inclusion with cooperative groups which support across the ability-range special education and ESL students. Note, however, the lessons are appropriate for most ages if modified by age and ability.

RLA.8.2.11 Identify and use traditional references sources for different types of information.

RLA.8.2.12 Independently resolve information conflicts and validate information through assessing, researching, and comparing data.

RLA.8.3.5 Play a variety of roles in group discussions which includes active listener, discussion leader and/or facilitator.

RLA.8.3.3 Think critically about oral/visual information presented; relate personal experiences and apply information to global situations.

RLA.8.3.4 Listen in order to analyze and critique information received in spoken texts (e.g. guest speaker, informational video, televised interview, radio news program).

RLA.8.1.10 Use resource materials (e.g. dictionary; glossary; thesaurus) to deter-

mine the meaning of unknown words of multiple meaning words.

P.E. 8.2.1 Identify and practice critical elements of skill for selected movement forms.

P.E. 8.3.1 List benefits of physical activity.

P.E. 8.4.3 Assess personal fitness related to 5 components of fitness: cardiovascular.

muscular strength, muscular endurance, body composition, and flexibility

P.E. 8.5.1 Demonstrate appropriate behavior in physical activity settings.

Activity – Day 1 – Students:

- Write to a prompt (7-9 minutes) about the elements of tai chi in conjunction with Newton's Third's Law (that every action has an equal and opposite reaction): "With every movement string all the parts together, keeping the entire body light and nimble." T'ai Chi Ch'uan Treatise
- Share previous knowledge regarding, stereotypical, media-driven images, and factual information about martial arts
- Canvas class for martial arts participants; hear students tell of experiences
- Show first 13 minutes of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* to martial arts scenes

Activity – Day 2 – Students:

- List observations from 13 minute clip about martial arts; share with class
- Complete empty outline handout from readings selected from Understanding Global Cultures, pp. 379 – 399; select according to age/ability levels
- Think, pair, and share their answers to self-assess and self-correct based upon reading

Activity – Day 3 – Students:

- Use See, See, Write process (pretest to see what they know; practice; posttest for credit) to begin work with vocabulary specific to martial arts, tai chi, and the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*: martial arts, tai, chi, dantien, intrinsic, extrinsic, Wudan, discipline, emotion, integrity, moving forces, Dao, inner disposition, yin, and yang
- Refer back to film observations to see how many terms can be "connected" in some way to the scene; build a mind map to represent their observations

Activity – Day 4 – Students:

- Hear the fairytale behind the evolution of tai chi from Tai Ji by Chungliang Al Huang
- Hear the real tale from same book; compare and contrast to reinforce

- Recognize the presence and force of yin and yang from Metzger and Zhou book
- Try their hand at creating the Chinese symbols for Tai and Chi; post in hallway
- Establish the presence of upper, mid, and lower dantien through breathing exercise to Chinese tai chi music

Activity – Day 5 – Students:

- Engage in discussion about internal and external conflicts from literary studies
- Layer in the ideas of intrinsic and extrinsic in life and in tai chi: “Yield as a way to overcome the unyielding; learn to lose as a way to win without aggression; use inner energy (chin) rather than outer (li); abide by dantien rather than reactions of the mind.” Tai Chi According to the I Ching How difficult is this on a daily basis?
- Watch the 13 minute clip a second time giving attention to yin and yang, as well, as terms discussed in See, Say, Write; students may make notes to support follow up discussion

Activity – Day 6 – Students:

- Read about the International Day of Tai Chi celebrated April 26 around the world
- Watch video clips on smart board of Tai Chi celebrations
- See video clip of Tai Chi in the parks and city squares in China
- Answer Write Break question, “Why would so many people engage in this activity?”
- Share writing responses after 5-7 minutes
- Take notes on background and history of Tai Chi in Eastern culture and the wisdom behind Eastern medicine/; blend in their knowledge of how the left and right brain work and teen issues like ADD, ADHD, anxiety, body consciousness, lack of exercise and low confidence

Activity – Day 7 – Students:

- Begin an introduction to the practice of Tai Chi with the Scott Cole DVD
- **NOTE: check with school nurse to be certain this activity is appropriate for students; some may have health plans with prohibit such activity.**
- Introduce the ritual steps to begin each Tai Chi session
- Follow the video to experiment with the opening positions for 20 minutes
- List the names of the positions practiced this day for recall and return

Activity – Day 8 Ongoing – Students:

- Practice, in class, twice weekly, until the 45 minute Tai Chi routine is learned
- Apply Tai Chi to daily live twice more on their own weekly
- Exercise the dantien and use positions which stimulate left and right brain hemispheres before tests, during altercations, and for problem-solving focus

- Extend the experience by learning 5 new positions and presenting them to the class
- Continue practices outdoors, as weather allows
- Include faculty in practice and addition of new positions

Materials and resources

Bond, Joey. *Tia Chi: Innerwave*. DVD. Digiview.com: China. 2006.

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"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon." Tai Chi Chuan Center: New York. Accessed 5/6/08.

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