

**CHINA LESSON PLAN**  
Lindsey Ritscher, Marietta High School

**COMMISSIONER LIN'S LETTER TO QUEEN VICTORIA  
ANTICIPATION GUIDE**

**Purpose:** This lesson is intended to help students understand the worldview of the Chinese, including the role of government and the proper behavior of individuals, and how this came into conflict with western ideas and behavior at the time of the Opium War in 1839.

**Grade level:** ninth grade World Studies

**Objectives:**

Analyze the influence of different cultural perspectives on the actions of groups.  
Analyze the role of government in different types of economies.  
Explain the global impact of imperialism on political and social reform in China.

**Materials:**

1. Textbook: *Modern World History: Patterns of Interaction*  
Students should be familiar with material in the following chapter.  
Ch. 12.1 *China Responds to Pressure from the West*
2. Video: *The Genius That Was China: Empires in Collision*  
Students watch this in class before we read Commission Lin's letter.
3. Handout: "Commissioner Lin: Letter to Queen Victoria, 1939" excerpts from the Modern History Sourcebook.
4. Handout: Anticipation Guide for "Commission Lin: Letter to Queen Victoria, 1939"

**Time:**

The lesson should take one day

**Procedures:**

1. Introduce the lesson by reviewing the Enlightenment.  
What did John Locke think about the purpose of government?  
What did Adam Smith think was the best way for a country to get rich?  
What should the role of government be in the economy?
2. Hand out the anticipation guide for *Commission Lin: Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839*
3. For detailed instructions on using anticipation guides  
see: [www.maxteaching.com](http://www.maxteaching.com)
4. Have students go over the vocabulary and rate their level of knowledge.

5. Discuss each word and have students write down the definition if necessary.
6. Have students turn the paper over and read through the statements checking all that they believe are accurate.
7. Have students compare their answers with a neighbor and make any changes they want.
8. Depending on the reading level of the students, have students read the letter silently or read it aloud to them. Students should highlight any information that would support or disprove a statement. The teacher might point out some statements that should be underlined.
9. After completing the reading, students should go back over the statements and note any evidence they found to support its accuracy.
10. Have students consult with neighbors and again make changes.
11. Have the class read over each statement providing evidence that proves or disproves the assertion. After discussion, make any changes in statement that would make them more accurate or cross out that that are incorrect.
12. Have students turn the paper over and give them five minutes to write a timed response to the question: In Commissioner Lin's view, what is the purpose of government?

## **EVALUATION**

1. Read the student's timed response and make note of any inaccuracies. Correct any points of misunderstanding for the whole class. Give credit for completion.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1839lin2.html>

[www.maxteaching.com](http://www.maxteaching.com)

*The Genius that was China: Empires in Collision.* Production of Film Australia in association with WBGH, Boston for NOVA. Boston, Mass: WBGH; Deerfield IL: Coronet Film & Video [distributor], 1990

**ANTICIPATION GUIDE: Commissioner Lin: Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839**

**BEFORE READING:** In the space to the left of each statement, place a check mark ( ) if you agree or think the statement is true.

**DURING OR AFTER READING:** Add new check marks or cross through those about which you have changed your mind. Keep in mind that this is not like the traditional “worksheet.” You may have to put on your thinking caps and “read between the lines.” Use the space under each statement to note information to support your thinking.

In the view of Commissioner Lin:

1. \_\_\_\_ The proper role of government is to take care of people and share the nation’s wealth.
2. \_\_\_\_ The wealth of foreign merchants was the result of their hard work and ingenuity.
3. \_\_\_\_ In 1839, trade with Europe was important to the economy of China.
4. \_\_\_\_ Opium was grown in the British colony of India and exported to China.
5. \_\_\_\_ The opium problem in China was the result of greedy foreign merchants.
6. \_\_\_\_ One solution to the opium problem was to have the British government prohibit the growing of opium and punish severely anyone who broke the law.
7. \_\_\_\_ It is important for everyone to show a proper sense of respect.
8. \_\_\_\_ All people have a conscience and can tell the difference between right and wrong.
9. \_\_\_\_ People who make bad choices must be punished.
10. \_\_\_\_ It goes against the laws of nature to act for your own advantage and not care about hurting other people.
11. \_\_\_\_ In your opinion, China was ethno-centric in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
12. \_\_\_\_ In your opinion, the Chinese economic system was more like capitalism than communism.

Vocabulary: Commissioner Lin: Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839

On the line to the left of each word, rate yourself on your knowledge of the following terms. Use a plus sign if you understand the word well enough to explain it to others. Use a check if you have heard of it, but don't consider yourself an expert. Use a zero if you don't yet know the word.

\_\_\_\_\_Opium\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Benefit\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Benevolent\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Propriety\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Commercial\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Ingenuity\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Seduced\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Severe\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Providence\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Ethno-centric\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Conscience\_\_\_\_\_

Focused Free Write: In Commissioner Lin's view, what is the purpose of government?