Chinese Calligraphy

By: April Thompson, NCTA Ohio 2017
Subject: Ancient World History
Grade: 7th

Academic Content Standards:
Content Statement: 16 – The ability to understand individual and group perspectives is essential to analyzing historic and contemporary issues.

Essential Question: What is Chinese Calligraphy and how is it different from written English?

Objective:
● Students will read about Chinese calligraphy.
● Students will use traditional ink and brush technique.
● Students will create their own Chinese character.
● Students will engage in discussion about how and why Chinese calligraphy is considered an art form.

Materials:
Chromebooks or printed copies of article about Chinese Calligraphy aloud (there is a great video clip at the bottom of this article that would be great to watch in addition to reading about it. You can also enlarge the image of the 6 styles of calligraphy for better discussion)
Blank paper (rice paper would be ideal as it is better for absorption. It can be found on Amazon here.)
Scrap paper
Calligraphy brushes
Ink stick and stone
Chinese Character worksheet and reference sheet (included below)

Activities:
Prior to lesson:
● Arrange desks into groups of 4.
● Cover desks with butcher block paper or newspaper.
● Place copy of Chinese Calligraphy article and Chinese Character worksheets on cluster of desks.
● Place scrap paper, pieces of blank paper, calligraphy brushes and pots of ink on cluster of desks.
During lesson:
● Students must place all personal materials under desk.
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- Read article about calligraphy aloud to class. During discussion ask probing questions including
  - Considering the Latin language discussed in Rome unit, how do these characters differ?
- Teacher will model technique for getting ink onto the brush and allow students to prepare brushes.
- Students will watch a Chinese Calligraphy Demonstration video clip. And follow step by step instructions on worksheet and scrap paper paying close attention to technique and order.
- Teacher will model making a final copy to be displayed.
- Students will practice their own technique and create a final copy without the aid of the worksheet.

Assessment:
Students will be informally assessed based on their completion of a Chinese character.