

Asian Cinderella Tales

Purpose:

To develop a variety of higher order thinking skills using one type of literature as told in a variety of Asian cultures and compared to a typical “western” version of the genre

To gain knowledge and ability to distinguish and identify the elements of this type of story in a compare/contrast format

To transfer knowledge gained from using the higher order thinking skills for analysis of a non-fiction memoir with similar story and plot elements.

Essential Questions: How are the Fairy Tales the same/different?

What are some of the ways daughters and /or girls are/were treated in Asian society and are they different than in Western society?

How do fairy tales in general reflect the values of a society and human nature?

Rationale:

Expose students to Cinderella stories from Asian cultures as well as to a memoir of a Chinese woman who experienced a “Cinderella” existence in real life in China.

Expose students to cultural differences but also to make them aware of societal and gender prejudices and bias.

Materials:

1. Asian Cinderella Grid Sheet

2. Copies of Books: **The Korean Cinderella**

Yeh Shen

Lily and the Wooden Bowl

Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter

3. Teacher’s Notes/ Handout: The Chinese Cinderella, Questions and Discussion

4. Websites:

A. www.learner.org/channel/workshops/conversations/conversation/

objectifying/extension.html

- B. www.surlalunefairytale.com/cinderella/other.html
- C. www.adelineyenmah.com
- D. www.geocities.com/Hollywood/50821/mulanfaq.html
- E. www.chinapage.com/mulan.html

5. Teacher Reference: **Cinderella: Oryx Multicultural Folktale Series**

Activities:

1. Present the Fairy Tale stories by reading them aloud to the class.
2. After **each** story, have students (divided into groups of 4/5) fill out the grid sheet with the appropriate answers.
3. Have a discussion and feedback from the class, using an overhead to clarify group answers.
4. Have a discussion as to why there are Cinderella stories and how they might serve as a “lesson” for a particular society. Have questions and discussion as to gender roles and values.
5. Present the memoir “The Chinese Cinderella: The true story of an unwanted daughter”. This book may be read out loud or copies given to each student to read.
6. Students receive the packet, “Teacher Notes” and answer the questions in their journal entries or on separate paper.
7. Have class discussion of the book and a compare and contrast activity as to the fairy tales and the true story. Be sure to have students read about Adeline Yen Mah, before the discussion (see website address).
8. Students will be asked to do **one** of the following culminating projects:
 - A. Write their own Cinderella story incorporating all of the elements learned
 - B. Write a short research paper on women’s roles/history in Japan, China, or Korea
 - C. Write a comparative essay on the role of Cinderella verses the role of Mulan in Chinese literature and society. Have them try to find examples in Chinese history to back their hypothesis/evaluation.

Assessment: Completion of the Cinderella Grid sheets, class discussions, group cooperation, Teacher Notes question packets completed and final culminating projects being turned in will be the basis of assessment of unit.

Grade:

The target grade is 6th, but these students are identified GT. There are many units for lower grade levels accessible on the web or this lesson can be used up to but not including the use of “Chinese Cinderella” or the higher level writing activities. This lesson, however, is designed to go into high school level language arts and/or sociology. The discussion level and writing expectations would be geared higher. The use of the author’s book “Falling Leaves” , which is the same story written on an adult level, could be used instead of “Chinese Cinderella” for the reading and discussion of real societal and gender issues. It may also be possible to use “The Tale of the Lady Ochikubo”, a 10th century Japanese novel which is an early precursor of a Cinderella story, but the teacher would out of necessity, would need to have parental permission for students to read it due to adult content matter.

Standards:

Grade 6: Social Studies

History: Early Civilizations

People in Societies: Cultures

Social Studies Skills and Methods: Obtaining Information, Thinking and Organizing, Communicating Information, Problem Solving

Grade 6: English Language Arts

Reading Applications: Literary Text

Writing Processes: Prewriting, Drafting, Revising and Editing

Writing Applications: 1,2,4

Writing Conventions

Research

Nancy Clendenen

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