

Lesson Plan on China
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Purpose:

A lot can be learned about the basic beliefs of Confucianism by looking at what Confucius said and wrote during his lifetime.

Essential Questions:

1. What did Confucius say and write during his life?
2. What can we learn about the basic beliefs of Confucianism from the words of Confucius?
3. Can we find examples of Confucianism in China today?

Rationale:

Students should learn the basic beliefs of Confucianism through the words of Confucius himself, then find examples of how some Confucian beliefs are still at the center of society, while other beliefs have changed.

Materials:

- Confucius quotes, divided in half and laminated if using more than once in a day.
- Student copies of the “Words to live by” chart
- Overhead of the Teacher copy of the “Words to live by” chart
- Student copies of Confucianism in China Today; current event articles on “Premier Wen’s New Plan” and “China to send woman into space.” OR, copies of current event articles that are more up-to-date that have examples of Confucian influence and lack thereof.
- Yellow and green highlighters

Activities:

1. Write this quote on the board before class:

What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

Confucius, The Confucian Analects

Ask students to read the quote and working with a partner, using “think, pair, share” restate it using a quote or proverb that is more familiar to them. Students should be able to mention “The Golden Rule,” or “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Mention to students that there are several quotes and proverbs in our culture that teach us lessons about how to behave. Ask students for examples... help them along with “Don’t count your chickens before they have hatched” or another well-known proverb. Explain to students that the Confucius quote encourages Chinese citizens to treat one another with respect. Tell students that they will learn more about the main Chinese religion or philosophy, Confucianism, by reading the quotes and words of Confucius.

2. Hand out a ½ quote to each student in the class. Tell them that they must figure out the words of Confucius by walking around the room and reading their quotes to each other until they find the other ½ quote that begins or finishes their quote and makes sense. (If there is an odd number of students, you will need to participate with a ½ quote. Also, some quotes will be repeated in a class larger than 18 students). When all students think they have found their partner, students should read their quotes to the class. Correct any incorrect matches.

3. Have students return to their seats and hand out the Student copies of “Words to live by.” Show the Teacher copy on the overhead with the right side covered up. Review each quote with the class and have students interpret what they think Confucius meant. As each quote is reviewed, show the right side of the chart and ask students to fill in the basic beliefs of Confucianism. Elaborate and use examples to explain each concept and relationship in the notes.
4. Hand out a copy of Confucianism in China Today (both articles are from March 7, 2004) and a yellow and green highlighter to each student. I suggest the teacher update the articles to the time when the lesson is taught. Ask students to highlight all information in the news article that connects to Confucianism. They should use the yellow highlighter for all information that proves Confucianism is still present in society and the green highlighter for all information that proves that Confucian principles have changed. Then in the space below the news articles, students should write a short paragraph that explains 1) how Confucianism still influences Chinese society and 2) how Chinese society has moved on from the original ideas of Confucianism.

Assessment

Collect Confucianism in China Today and assess the following:

- highlighted information that pertains to Confucian philosophy
- a paragraph that identifies some of the following:
 - 1) Confucian influence in the first article; government feels need to take care of it’s citizens in the “plan for the people;” government promises to make sure there are enough jobs, those without money are still provided for, and Chinese who live in the rural villages are living lives equal to Chinese in the cities
 - 2) A change in Confucian principles in the second article; China has agreed to allow a woman to be trained for space travel; Confucian beliefs have not allowed women to hold equal status to men in the past; the ACWF is a group that advocates for women and they celebrate Women’s International Day

Grade Adaptation:

The target grade of this lesson is the 7th grade.

Scaling Up: As homework, ask students to find their own news articles on China within the past year, as examples of continued Confucian influence or lack of Confucian influence.

Scaling Down: “Words to live by” can leave out only key words for students to fill in. Read articles with students or re-write into easier text.

Teacher Copy

**Words to live by:
The Teachings of Confucius**

Confucius Quote	Lesson to be learned about Confucianism from the quote
<p>Respect yourself and others will respect you.</p> <p>The superior man in everything considers righteousness to be essential. He performs it according to the rules of propriety (li). He brings it forth in humility. He completes it with sincerity. This is indeed a superior man.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Li: follow the rules of propriety (politeness and good manners)• Give respect to your position within society and the relationships that you have with others
<p>The superior man, when resting in safety, does not forget that danger may come. When in a state of security he does not forget the possibility of ruin. When all is orderly, he does not forget that disorder may come. Thus his person is not endangered, and his States and all their clans are preserved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Luan: chaos that results from no rules• Most feared social catastrophe for Chinese
<p>Have no friends not equal to yourself.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends should be equal to one another• It is the <i>only</i> basic relationship where both people are equal
<p>When your father is alive observe his intentions. When he is deceased, model yourself on the memory of his behavior. If in three years after his death you have not deviated from your father's ways, then you may be considered a filial child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic relationship: parent is superior to child• Filial piety: All people should honor those who are superior to them and take care of those who are inferior to them
<p>He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic relationship: ruler is superior to subject• Need strong government to lead people by virtue (goodness)
<p>The superior man cannot be known in little matters, but he may be entrusted with great concerns. The small man may not be entrusted with great concerns, but he may be known in little matters.</p> <p>The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic relationship: older is superior to the younger• Elders (such as an elder sibling) should protect and be a model for the younger (sibling)• Younger should obey and honor older
<p>According to Confucianism, women had to obey their fathers when they were not married, to obey their husbands when in wedlock, and to obey their sons in their widowhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic relationship: husband is superior to wife• Throughout the course of their lives, women must always obey the men in their lives

Student Copy

**Words to live by:
The Teachings of Confucius**

Confucius Quote	Lesson to be learned about Confucianism from the quote
<p>Respect yourself and others will respect you.</p> <p>The superior man in everything considers righteousness to be essential. He performs it according to the rules of propriety (li). He brings it forth in humility. He completes it with sincerity. This is indeed a superior man.</p>	
<p>The superior man, when resting in safety, does not forget that danger may come. When in a state of security he does not forget the possibility of ruin. When all is orderly, he does not forget that disorder may come. Thus his person is not endangered, and his States and all their clans are preserved.</p>	
<p>Have no friends not equal to yourself.</p>	
<p>When your father is alive observe his intentions. When he is deceased, model yourself on the memory of his behavior. If in three years after his death you have not deviated from your father's ways, then you may be considered a filial child.</p>	
<p>He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star, which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it.</p>	
<p>The superior man cannot be known in little matters, but he may be entrusted with great concerns. The small man may not be entrusted with great concerns, but he may be known in little matters.</p> <p>The superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.</p>	
<p>According to Confucianism, women had to obey their fathers when they were not married, to obey their husbands when in wedlock, and to obey their sons in their widowhood.</p>	

1/2 quotes for students to read, analyze and match up.

<p>Respect yourself and...</p>	<p>...others will respect you.</p>
<p>The superior man in everything considers righteousness to be essential. He performs it according to the rules of propriety (li)...</p>	<p>...He brings it forth in humility. He completes it with sincerity. This is indeed a superior man.</p>
<p>The superior man, when resting in safety, does not forget that danger may come. When in a state of security he does not forget the possibility of ruin...</p>	<p>..When all is orderly, he does not forget that disorder may come. Thus his person is not endangered, and his States and all their clans are preserved.</p>
<p>Have no friends...</p>	<p>...not equal to yourself.</p>
<p>When your father is alive observe his intentions. When he is deceased, model yourself on the memory of his behavior...</p>	<p>... If in three years after his death you have not deviated from your father's ways, then you may be considered a filial child.</p>
<p>He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star...</p>	<p>... which keeps its place and all the stars turn towards it.</p>
<p>The superior man cannot be known in little matters, but he may be entrusted with great concerns...</p>	<p>...The small man may not be entrusted with great concerns, but he may be known in little matters.</p>
<p>The superior man is modest in his speech,...</p>	<p>...but exceeds in his actions.</p>
<p>According to Confucianism, women had to obey their fathers when they were not married, to obey their husbands...</p>	<p>when in wedlock, and to obey their sons in their widowhood.</p>

Confucianism in China Today

Premier Wen pledges: 'Put people first'

"Putting people first" will be the the main feature of the central government's work in 2004, Premier Wen Jiabao vowed on Friday.

In his first government work report to the 10th National People's Congress, Wen promised "all-round, balanced and sustainable" development focused on job creation, improving the welfare system and narrowing the urban-rural divide.

The innovative premier devoted an entire section of the report to outlining a range of measures aimed at building a more people-oriented government.

Summing up his first year in office and looking ahead to the next, the premier told China's top legislature that the central government had planned for 7 per cent economic growth this year and promised "all-round, balanced and sustainable" socio-economic development.

China to send woman into space

After putting a man in space for the first time in October last year, China plans to train female astronauts for space voyages, the country's largest women's organization confirmed in Beijing Sunday.

"China will soon start to train its own female astronauts," Gu Xiulian, president of the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), announced at an awarding ceremony for the country's female model judges Saturday afternoon in Beijing, just days before the "March 8" International Women's Day.

While officials in charge of China's manned spaceflight program were yet to be reached for confirmation, high-ranking sources with the ACWF confirmed Gu's announcement.

"Following the country's first successful manned spaceflight last year, I put forward the suggestion that women should also be trained for space travel, and this suggestion has been accepted by the central authorities," Gu, also vice chairwoman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the Chinese parliament, added.

China joined Russia and the United States in the elite club of manned spaceflight last October as the homemade Shenzhou-5 spacecraft, piloted by Yang Liwei, a former fighter pilot of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) air force, orbited Earth 14 times and returned safely.

Read each article above and highlight in yellow any information and that proves that Confucian beliefs still exist in China today. Then, highlight in green any information that proves that Confucian beliefs have changed from when Confucius was alive. Then, write a short paragraph below write a short paragraph that explains 1) how Confucianism still influences Chinese society and 2) how Chinese society has moved on from the original ideas of Confucianism.

Sources Used

Quotations

Class handout on Chinese Thought

www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Confucius

www.warriortours.com/intro/religion-confucianism.htm

News Articles

Selected from news sources on www.currenthevents.com. This website includes a wide variety of news sources to get daily articles. Specifically, I used www.changingchina.com and www.worldnewschina.com.

Information on Confucianism

Murphey, Rhoads. *East Asia: A New History*, 3rd ed. New York: Pearson Education Inc., 2004.

Class handout on Chinese Thought