

East Asian Studies Seminar

Lesson Plan #2: Korea

By: Tom Molnar

“What does Korean Literature reveal about the impacts of 937 wars/invasions fought on the Korean peninsula throughout history?”

Purpose: The purpose of this lesson is to have the student critically analyze both contemporary and historical Korean literature/poetry. Their goal will be to come to some understanding of the impacts of invasion and war on the Korean people.

Rationale: To allow students to go more deeply into the Korean psyche/mindset, through the examination of Korean thought through written and oral traditions.

Materials: Selections from *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Poetry* by Peter Lee and from *Snowy Road and Other Stories* ed. By Hyun-jae Yee Salle

Activities:

- classroom reading time
- classroom discussions

Assessment:

- student discussions
- response essay on the original question

Grade Adaption: High School 10th – 12th Grade. These could easily be adapted to the Middle School by tailoring the discussions to that level. Also, another story from *Snowy Road and Other Stories* could be selected to replace, *Balloon*.

*** A more detailed lesson plan is included with this material.**

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3 Day Lesson Plan – “What impacts of the many Korean wars and invasions can the students detect through examining Korean literature and poetry?”

- Day 1:**
- students are presented with the initial question stated above
 - a historical context for the question is given – a discussion of some of those many historic conflicts on the Korean peninsula
 - students are given packets of 3 reading from *Snowy Road and Other Stories*, ed. Hyun-jae Yee Salle. New York: White Plan Press, 1993 Three stories:
 1. Snowy Road
 2. Echo. Echo
 3. Balloon
 - Students are given classroom reading time to begin packets
 - Any unread stories will be given as homework readings
- Day 2:**
- class begins with whole class discussion of the handouts from *Snowy Road and Other Stories*
 - following the discussions of the stories, the student will be given a packet of readings taken from *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Korean Poetry* by Peter H. Lee, Columbia University Press, 2002
 - poems will be read aloud and discussed with the class
- Day 3:**
- continuation of themes of war and occupation within the poetry and oral traditions in the packets
 - a discussion of the impacts of the many invasions and wars on Korea as seen in Korean Literature and poetry.
 - assignment of response essay on the initial question

Response to the Question:

“What does Korean literature reveal about the impacts of 937 wars/invasions on the Korean peninsula throughout history?”

From your readings and the discussions in class, what do you think the impacts have been? How has the “Korean” character been defined by the many wars and invasions that they have suffered from? Back up your findings with some evidence from the short stories or poems that we have been discussing. Speculate on how the “American” character has been defined by the absence of invasions and wars being fought on our soil.