Chinese Minority Cultures Literature Review

Purpose:
Students will review literature and non-fiction sources concerning the Chinese minority culture groups in order to identify the traditions and values of these cultures as being unique and important.

Target Grade Level: 7

Topic: Minority Culture Values as Evidenced through Literature and Children’s Non-Fiction Sources

Concepts:
Identifying elements that characterize culture in literature
Analyzing the representation of Chinese minority peoples in textbooks.
Appreciating differences among the peoples of China

Materials:
Texts and various picture and storybooks, the internet and newspaper

Key Idea:
Minority cultures used storytelling to portray the belief system and the values of their culture.
Some Chinese minority cultures are struggling for fair representation.

Procedures:
1) After reading a variety of literature that is taken from the Han or major Chinese culture group, students will examine a map of China and locate areas that are traditionally designated for
minority groups. Most of these areas are on the borders. To be considered a minority an ethnic group must have:
- a specific language
- a homeland
- distinct customs
- strong self identity

A good source to explain how a group becomes a minority in China is www.c-c-c.org/chineseculture/minority/minority.html

What are the minority cultures in the United States? How is “minority” defined in the United States?

2) Discuss with the students how China provides for their minority groups? What may be some problems that minority groups are having in China?

Good sites for these discussions:
- www.ahcpr.gov/research/minorhlth.htm

There are also political protest sites representing Chinese minorities.

3) The students will read literature from the Minority Groups of China below and complete the attached questionnaire concerning each story. Note that the stories need to be appreciated on a literary level in addition to identifying a specific ethnic minority. While they are reading the stories they may locate the Ethnic group’s current location on the map.
Your Name Here____________________________________
Name of Chinese Ethnic Minority________________________
Name of Story_______________________________________
Basic Story Line of the Piece of Literature
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Setting________________________________________________
Characters ____________________________________________
Name four things that are valued in the story
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Name two general problems identified in the story:
1)____________________________________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________
Tell two way the characters solve the problem in the story.
1)____________________________________________________________________
2)____________________________________________________________________
What did you learn about the specific Ethnic Minority Group from this story?
4) Students will read excerpts from the Literature List for Specific Ethnic Minority Groups (below)
   *This will grow as more examples are found and added.
   *Some stories do not identify a specific minority, but the story may identify the region in which they live.

Ch’iang  * Big Brother-Man; Little Brother-Rabbit

Chuang  * The Chuang Brocade
         * The Rabbits Got Pink Eyes and Long Ears
         * The Princess’ Veil

Hani    * Why the Sun Rises when the Rooster Crows

Kazakh * Smart Head Better Than Sharp Teeth

Kawa    * The Competitive Tiger

Kazakh * The Smell of Food and Jingle of Coins

Korean  * The Choosy Maid of Yen-Pien

Lisu    * The Heavenly Song of the Green-Spotted Dove

Miao    * How the Rooster got His Crown/ Amy Lowry Poole
         * The Peacock’s Tail
         * The Golden Sheng

Mongol * How the Horse-Head Fiddle Was Created
         * A Merry Prank of Pa-Leng-Ts’ang
         * Hunter Hailibu’s Great Sacrifice
         * The Jealous Artist and Architect
Mountainous
Nung

LingLi and the Phoenix Fairy/Ellin Greene
The Tale of the Magic Green Water-Pearl

Oronchon
Pai

The Twins of Paikala Mountain
The Winding-Horn Village

Puyi

The Great Battle Between the Grasshoppers and the Monkeys

Shui

The Story of the House

Southern China

The Lost Horse

Tai

The God of Faces

Tibet

The Donkey and the Rock
The Tale of the Golden Vase and the Monkeys
The Bird of Happiness
The Tibetan Envoy’s Mission
All the Way to Lhasa
The Story of the Tortoise and the Monkey
A Hungry Wolf
The Tower That Reached From Earth to Heaven
The Jackals and the Tiger
The Country and the Mice

T’uchia
T’ien The Brave, Hero of the Hsia River

T’ung

The Stonemason
The White-Hair Waterfall

Uighur

Anizu’s Magic Wonder Flute
The Golden Carp

Wolong Valley
Shooting the Moon
Treasure Mountain
How the Moon and Stars were Created
The One Horned Ox
Maiden Liu, the Songster
The Ten Thousand Treasure Mountain

Yi
A Well Deserved Punishment
When Rocks Rolled Crackling Wisdom
The Magic Pole
Seventh Sister and the Serpent

5) In addition to reading the literature from the Chinese Ethnic Minority Cultures the students will review information about minority cultures in Children’s non-fiction books, articles and on the internet.

For example, an article from Saturday, March 6th, 2004 from the Columbus Dispatch entitled, “China to Focus on its Social Ills” gives the impression that the Chinese government will make an attempt to help the ethnic minorities who are struggling despite a good overall economy.

Non-fiction sources intended to educate students about China will vary on the attention given to the ethnic minority cultures. Students will learn to be sensitive to the representation of minorities in textbooks by completing a survey to build their awareness.

Below is a list of specific nonfiction books on China that can be reviewed.


*China*, Mason Crest Publishers, 1999,


*Touring China Eighty Years Ago*, National Geographic, Chelsea House, 1999.


Your name Here: __________________________

**Chinese Minority Culture Textbook Survey**

Name of Textbook________________________________________

Name of Publisher________________________________________

Date of Textbook________________________________________

Name Ethnic Minority Culture(s) Represented in the Book (if any)
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Number of Pages of the Book_________

Number of Pages Given to Ethnic Minority Information_________

Number of Chinese Ethnic Minority Pictures __________

Basic Summary of Information Covering Ethnic Minority People
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Do you feel there was sufficient information given about the ethnic minority populations in this text? Why or why not?
6) Given the students review of Chinese Minority Culture literature and nonfiction sources, each student will choose a minority group to write a brief two to three page report or power point presentation. The report should include these items:

Name of Chinese Minority Culture ______________________
Location in China ____________________________________
Geography __________________________________________
Approximate Population of Group________________________
Religion____________________________________________
Standard of Living _____________________________________
Dress______________________________________________
Daily Work__________________________________________
Role of Women in the Culture____________________________
Role of Men in the Culture_______________________________
Role of Children in the Culture__________________________
Specific Cultural Aspects that Make this Group Unique

This Culture’s Relationship to Majority (Han)

Traditions or celebrations________________________________
Why did you choose this Chinese Ethnic Minority Group to Study?

These Internet Sources are very helpful overviews of Ethnic Minority Groups in China:
   www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/nationality
There are also some sites devoted to individual minority groups.

**Sources for Fiction Literature**

Bender, Dr. Mark  *Seventh Sister and the Serpent:* Narrative Poem of the Yi People
http://deall.ohio-state.edu/bender.4-ethnopoetics


Kuo, Louise and YuanHsi, *Chinese Folk Tales*, Celestial Arts 1976


Young, Ed, *The Lost Horse*, Silver Whistle Harcourt Brace & Co