

**Teaching about Asia Seminar
Dottie Worley
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**University of Toledo
Dr. William Hoover**

CHINA

Red Scarf Girl
by Ji-Li Jiang

The Cultural Revolution

JAPAN

Tanka
Shinto and Buddhist Inspired
Poetry and Gardens in
Japan

KOREA

The Korean Cinderella
by Shirley Climo
Compare and Contrast the
Cinderella Story Between Cultures

CULMINATION

Asian Culture Family Night

School Placement

The following lessons will be taught at Jefferson Junior High School in the Washington Local School District. The school is located in northern Toledo, Ohio but is not a part of the Toledo Public School System. Jefferson Junior High is unique in that it houses only seventh grade students fed into by all nine elementary schools within the school district. The student population ranges between 500 and 600 students each year. The students are divided and assigned to a team of teachers including one science, one social studies, one math, two language arts, and one special education teacher(s). There are either four or five teams of teachers each year depending on student numbers, and typically, there are approximately 100-120 students per team. The teaming practice allows for teachers to conference/communicate daily in regards to the unique needs of the students, cross-curricular units, field trips, guest speakers, and general duties such as grade cards and interim reports. The school also retains two each of physical education, art, and music teachers as well as several intervention and elective instructors. The population average is composed of approximately eighty-six percent Caucasian students, thirteen percent African-American students, and one percent Hispanic/Asian/Other students.

Personal Information

I have taught in the Washington Local School District for six years and have taught language arts/reading at Jefferson Junior High School for the past five years. The main focus of our language arts/reading program comes directly from the Ohio Department of Education Standards and Benchmarks. I am expected to adhere to the ODE benchmarks *exclusively*. Given the fact that our reading benchmarks are literature based, I teach reading through well-written novels. My interest in the Teaching About Asia Seminar developed at the time I lost a close family member to liver cancer. Eric was Taiwanese, grew up in Taiwan, and came to the United States in his early twenties. He graduated with a law degree from Tulane University and practiced international law in sunny Los Angeles, California. In mid 2004, he doubled over while representing a client in court and was diagnosed with liver cancer shortly thereafter. The cancer claimed his life within four short months, and he passed away on September 28, 2004 much to the sorrow of our family.

During Eric's lifetime, he continuously shared aspects of his culture with me, a member of his adopted American family. From food to language (Mandarin) to culture and religion (Buddhism), he was very open and patient with his explanations. Eric frequently assisted me with teaching ideas to promote an acceptance and understanding between American and Chinese/Taiwanese cultures with my students. I have also been the recipient of several beautiful gifts from Eric and his biological brothers including antique hand-carved jade beads, antique miniature hand-painted vases, and a genuine silk scarf that students marvel over each year. He also recorded a rendition of *Happy Birthday* in Mandarin Chinese for my students to listen to and learn to sing as well. Though Eric has passed from this life, through my classroom each year, he continues to teach and profoundly impact the lives of American students.

In April of 2003, I had the privilege of presenting at the OCTELA (Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts) conference in Columbus. While I was there, Ji-Li Jiang, author of *Red Scarf Girl* was featured as a key note speaker. I had searched for ways to bring Chinese culture to a greater focus in my seventh grade classroom, and she opened that door of opportunity. Not only did I learn a great deal from her presentation, I also won a full classroom set of her novel *Red Scarf Girl*. With Eric's help, I set about preparing lessons to teach the unit. It was only a few

short months later that he was diagnosed with his cancer – long before the lessons could be completed. One day after his death, I received the invitation to the Teaching About Asia seminar offered at the University of Toledo. The seminar has granted me the opportunity to not only enrich my background in regards to China but develop a broader base of knowledge in regards to Japan and Korea as well so that I may, in turn, present that opportunity to my students. What I teach is in honor to, and in loving memory of, my brother, Eric.

The Great Cultural Revolution
***Red Scarf Girl* by Ji-Li Jiang**

Purpose:

The Great Cultural Revolution in China was meant to bring about positive changes for China. Instead, it brought about great destruction and harm. Things once held in high regard became things to be ridiculed. Communism and political greed caused China many hardships during this time.

This will be a part of a cross-curricular unit between the social studies teacher and the language arts teacher.

Essential Questions:

1. How was school success and achievement regarded during the cultural revolution?
2. How do the philosophies of Communism differ from the philosophies of a Democracy?
3. In what ways are the Cultural Revolution of China similar to the Holocaust in Germany?
4. How is the Chinese New Year similar or different from the American New Year?
5. In what ways are the home/living arrangements similar or different between American homes and Chinese homes?
6. In what ways are/were the sense of loyalty to the country's leader similar or different between Chairman Mao and President _____ (currently George W. Bush.)

Rationale:

To introduce Chinese culture and significant historical events to junior high students through a well-written autobiographical novel.

Materials:

- vocabulary list
- index cards
- classroom set of novel: *Red Scarf Girl*
- CD player
- ODE six point and three point writing rubrics
- DVD or Video *China Cry*

Activities:**Day 1 – Introduction**

(The students will already have created a time-line in their social studies classroom that includes the dynasty years, Sun-Yet-San’s term, Chang- Kai-Chek’s term, and Mao Tse Tung’s term.)

1. Pass out the novels and explain to students where, on their time-lines, the era of the Cultural Revolution falls.
2. Pass out the list of vocabulary words and go through each word individually for correct pronunciation and definition in real terms.
3. Have students write each word on an index card and write the definition on the back of each respective card.
4. Play a game of “ready-set-say” with vocabulary cards.

(To play the game: students put cards, word side up, on table in front of them. Teacher reads a definition twice followed by the words, “ready-set-say”. Students scan their word cards and say the word that fits the definition given.) Do this several times over the course of the unit.

Days 2-15 – *Red Scarf Girl*

1. Ask students to imagine leaving school and arriving home only to find that their homes had been ransacked by their peers at school. Not only that, their possessions had been confiscated, and there is nothing they can do about it. They can’t call the police because the police no longer have any power. Next, they find out that their mom had been beaten by with a stick by one of their peers because she would not confess to a crime she had not

committed, and worse yet, their father had been taken away and “detained” for a crime he had not committed. Open the floor to dialogue between students and teacher. Explain that this was part of standard procedure during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, and that *Red Scarf Girl* is Ji-Li-Jiang’s true story in which she describes the changes China as well as her family went through during the revolution. The concept of “class status” should also be discussed.

2. Begin the novel by having students follow along as the novel is listened to by playing the book on compact disk. (Because of the unusual language and name pronunciations, students in grade seven gain more fluent comprehension by listening to the novel as they follow along with the written text.)
3. Stop the CD at various points to discuss the events in the story. Allow students to interact with each other in regards to their own points of view of what is happening. Include dialogue regarding the issue of conflicting loyalties. Also, focus in on the sadness Ji-Li feels when Chinese New Year, which also happens to be her birthday, is not celebrated in any way.
4. At the conclusion of the novel, open a discussion. Allow students to vent their personal feelings in regards to what happened to Ji-li, her family, and China in general. Discuss similarities and differences between the cultural revolution and what is happening in Iraq today or what happened during the holocaust of the Jewish population in Germany. Discuss the value of Ji-Li sharing this very significant era of China’s history.

Day 16-17 – Chinese New Year and Authentic Chinese Food

1. Discuss with students the significance of the Chinese New Year and the traditions that surround it, in particular, the “hong bao” or red envelopes filled with money that are given as gifts for the new year.
2. Discuss with students what a “dim-sum” is and the types of food that are served at dim sum.

Day 18 – Celebrating

As a culminating activity, serve students a dim-sum while celebrating Chinese New Year complete with a mini-lesson on how to use chopsticks. The menu consists of pre-cooked, frozen foods that can be easily prepared in a microwave oven and an electric skillet:

- Char siu bao (pork dumplings)
- Vegetable spring rolls
- Pot stickers
- Taro root dumplings
- Steamed sticky rice
- Tangerines (no preparation needed)

Following the meal, pass out a hong bao (red envelope) to each student with a facsimile of paper money that would have been in circulation during the Cultural Revolution period.

Assessment:

The students will be given the assignment of a five-paragraph pattern comparison paper. They may individually choose to write about one of the following options:

- Compare how school achievement and success was valued during the cultural revolution in China with how school achievement and success is valued here in America.
- Compare the celebration of Chinese New Year to the celebration of New Year in America. To which American holiday is it more closely related?
- Compare Communists' beliefs to a Democracy's beliefs.
- Compare Ji-Li's sense of loyalty to her leader, Chairman Mao, and your sense of loyalty to your leader, President _____ (currently George W. Bush)
- Compare the Cultural Revolution to the Jewish Holocaust
- Compare Ji-Li's home/living arrangements to your home/living arrangements.

Score the essays using the rubrics recommended by the Ohio Department of Education as used on the Ohio Graduation Test (OGT). The rubrics consist of a six point and three point rubric.* Assessment will also be ongoing through teacher observation as students discuss the novel on a daily basis.

(On any given day, the video or DVD *China Cry* can be shown as a whole or selected segments. The video is the true story of Nora Lam who experienced life in China under Chairman Mao Tse Tung and communist rule.)

Grade Adaptation:

This particular novel can not be scaled down to a lower grade level simply because of the content. The lesson can be scaled up by having students read the novel independently. I would add comprehension questions after every two chapters to be answered on paper and discussed as a class. I would also have students do oral presentations on the various aspects of the revolution (ie: propaganda posters) which would include visuals. The visuals could include power point presentations.

Students could volunteer to prepare a dish for the dim-sum as opposed to having it prepared by the teacher alone.

In lower grades, a teacher could explain the significance of Chinese New Year and celebrate it along with serving a modified dim-sum.

*The OGT writing rubrics can be found at this website:
http://www.ode.state.oh.us/proficiency/ogt/9th_2004_Practice_Tests_FLength.asp
then clicking on Writing Practice Test Scoring Guidelines & Sample Papers [\(PDF\)](#)

Japanese Religion: Inspiration on Poetry and Gardens

Purpose:

The Buddhist origin of Japan's oldest form of poetry: tanka

The Shinto and Buddhist influence of peaceful and calm gardens.

Essential Questions:

1. In what way does a tanka express nature's beauty?
2. How do you write a tanka?
3. In what way do the Japanese express the importance of nature through gardening?

Rationale:

Exposure of students to a new form of poetry and the concept of gardening for reasons other than food production.

Materials:

- Several examples of tanka poems
- Paper, pencil, computers or word processors
- Shoe-box lids
- Sand
- Forks
- Rocks
- Small plants or small silk arrangements
- Fixative spray
- Card stock to make folded cards to mount tanka on

Activities:

These activities are in conjunction with the social studies unit in regards to Japan.

The social studies teacher will be teaching from McGraw Hill/Glencoe *World History: Journey Across Time: The Early Ages* written by Jackson J. Spielvogel, Ph.D. National Geographic.

These particular lessons will correlate with pages 498 -501.

As the language arts teacher, I must remain within and build lesson into the language arts content and not teach the social studies content.

Day 1: What is a tanka?

Remind students to think back to their social studies lesson on the influence of Buddhist and Shinto religions in Japan. Within that unit they learned that during the Middle Ages, the Japanese wrote poems, and Japan's oldest form of poetry is a tanka. The tanka consists of five lines, unrhymed, that capture the beauty of nature or the joys and sorrows of life. Their text included this poem:

*“On autumn nights
the dew is
colder than ever-
in every clump of grasses
the insects weep”*
-author unknown,
tanka from the Kokinshu

Read several other examples of tankas and discuss the individual poems with students.

Day 2 – Gardens of Japan

Using the website <http://www.jgarden.org/gardens.asp?TAB=photos&ID=277> show students examples of beautiful gardens designed to create a feeling of peace and calmness. Many of these gardens have carefully placed rocks, raked sand, and a few plants for gazing upon...not for consumption. Allow students to discuss the gardens and choose favorites. Encourage expressing the reasons for the favorite design. (Other websites can be easily viewed simply by going to “Yahoo” and typing in “Japanese Gardens+photographs”.) Give each student a shoe box lid, a container of clean white sand, various shaped “rocks” (stones), miniature artificial plants/arrangements, and a fork. Allow students to individually create a garden of beauty. Allot plenty of time to experiment with different arrangements until each student is satisfied with his or her garden. Spray the final arrangement with a fixative to secure the sand.

Day 3 – Writing a tanka

Have students write a tanka that captures the essence and beauty of their own garden. It must follow the correct pattern of an unrhymed, five-line poem. The final draft must be error-proof, computer generated, and mounted on a folded card that will stand upright. Students will present their gardens and tanka orally and individually to their peers. In addition, each student's garden and tanka is to be displayed in the media center/library for others to learn from and enjoy. They will also be on display for the Asian Culture Family Night, a culminating feature of the Asian Studies Unit.

Assessments:

The garden will be scored on a rubric that gives a score of 1, 2, or 3 in the categories of:

- A. originality
- B. form
- C. consideration of nature

The poem will be scored on a rubric that gives a score of 1, 2 or 3 in the categories of:

- A. The poem directly captures the natural beauty of the garden for which it was written
- B. The poem is spelling-error free
- C. The poem is neatly mounted

Grade Adaptation:

This lesson can be scaled down to an elementary age by using the same procedures with more assistance with the poetry-writing. Perhaps the teacher could read one particular tanka to the students and have the students create their garden in relation to that particular poem.

To scale the lesson up, students could write two tankas, one in regards to nature, the other in regards to the sorrows and joys of life. Both could be organized into a book of tanka poems. Several books could be made and placed in the library. In addition, I would attempt to secure an area of land around the school, if available, and have students build a garden. Area nurseries and landscaping companies could be contacted with a request for donations. The students could collaboratively work on a paper lay-out of the garden then build it. A bench could be placed near the garden in which students could meditate and/or read the book of tankas. The garden itself could be maintained by the students and also used as an anticipatory set for opening the study of Japan for classes in future years.

The Korean Cinderella

By Shirley Climo Illustrated by Ruth Heller

Purpose:

Our student team population also has special education inclusion students. Because the social studies teacher includes Yeh Shen, the Chinese story of Cinderella, in her lesson plans regarding China, I am creating this lesson to be unique to the special education students on the team so that they may share their knowledge with their peers.

Essential Questions:

1. In what ways are the American, Chinese, and Korean stories of Cinderella alike and/or different?
2. What is unique to the Korean version of Cinderella?

Rationale:

Exposure of students to a familiar story told in the context of the Korean culture.

Materials:

- A number of copies of *The Korean Cinderella* so that each group of four students has a copy to share.
- Large Venn Diagrams that will hang on the wall
- Markers
- One paragraph pattern template
- Paper and pencils

Activities:

Students will listen and follow along as *The Korean Cinderella* is read. In groups of four, they will fill in the Venn diagram that are taped to the wall that will reveal the similarities and differences between the three versions of Cinderella that they are now familiar with: *The Story of Cinderella*, *Yeh Shen*, and *The Korean Cinderella*.

Each group of students will orally share their diagrams and their discoveries.

Students will be assigned the task of writing a one paragraph pattern essay in which they will either discuss the similarities or the differences between the different versions.

Assessment:

The students will be assessed through teacher observation as they discuss the stories and fill in the Venn diagrams. They will also be assessed through the use of the ODE six point and three point writing rubrics on their one paragraph pattern essays.

Grade Adaptation:

This lesson can easily be scaled down to early primary grades by eliminating the one paragraph pattern essay and having the teacher fill in one Venn diagram as students orally tell the teacher what to put in the diagram.

To scale up, students could be asked to extend the essay to a five paragraph pattern essay which would require more supporting details and some individual research. An additional assignment might be to have the students take the story and re-write it in script form. Assign parts to various students and record the play for younger children. The script may also be given to the drama teacher who, in turn, could have the students perform the play as well.

Asian Culture Family Night

A Culmination of Lessons

Purpose:

Families can learn and explore the cultures of Asia together through fun, hands-on activities.

Essential Questions:

1. What have you become aware of that you did not know about Asian Culture before attending our Asian Culture family night?

Rationale:

Exposure of parents, siblings, grandparents, and care-givers to Asian culture and lessons students are experiencing at school.

To bridge school and community.

Materials:

- Building permit for after school hours
- Available classrooms
- Available instructors/teachers

➤ **Additional Materials as Listed Below for Individual Sessions:**

Room One: Build a Garden	Room Two: Sen-Say Says:	Room Three: Happy New Year
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- ~ shoe box lids (25)
- ~ white sand (two large bags)
- ~ forks (25)
- ~ rocks/stones
- ~ miniature artificial plants

- ~ overhead projector
- ~ basic Japanese words/ directions on overhead transparency
- ~ sen-say (instructor) capable of speaking in Japanese

- ~ book about Chinese New Year
- ~ red construction paper
- ~ glue
- ~ Chinese New Year Candy
- ~ instructions to make hong bao*

Room Four: Tangram Designs	Room Five: Metrics	Cafeteria: Chopsticks
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- ~ cardboard tangram sets (enough for 25 people)
- ~ copies of completed tangram designs to be duplicated by manipulating the pieces of the set

- ~ map of Asia
- ~ chart of countries: Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, and India with annual precipitation in inches, temperature in °F and altitude in ft.
- ~ pencils
- ~ calculators

- ~ wooden chopsticks
- ~ sticky rice
- ~ small disposable bowls
- ~ instructor proficient with chopsticks

Art Room:Origami

- ~ origami paper
- ~ instructions
- ~ instructor proficient in origami

Gymnasium:tai-chi instruction

- ~comfortable clothing
- ~ no health conditions
- ~ instructor proficient in tai-chai

Activities:

A note will be sent home three weeks prior to the Asian Culture Family Night with the request of a \$1.00 admission charge and a sign-up section for five of the eight sessions offered - in order of preference. A maximum of four sessions per family will be allowed due to time constraints. Each session will last approximately twenty to twenty-five minutes.

Each session will begin with a brief explanation of the activity and its origin. Instructions will be given, and the students, together with their parents, may participate in the activity. (“Sen-Say Says” is a version of “Simon Says”).

One of our art teachers, one of our physical education teachers, and one other content area teacher who taught in Japan for two years will be instructing that evening as well as each one of the content area teachers on my team at Jefferson.

Assessment:

The assessment of the success of this evening will be evident through parent-teacher, parent-parent, student-parent, and student-student dialogue as well as a follow-up survey.

Grade Adaptation:

This same activity can take place at the high school level with the sessions being modified to target the curriculum benchmarks of particular grade levels.

At the elementary level, it would be best to have an Asian Family Day in which the activities would be offered school-wide with each classroom offering a different session.

- Directions and template for making the hong bao can be found at this website:

http://www.newton.mec.edu?Angier/CimSum/china_dim_sum_red_envelop.html

References

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www.visionvideo.com ISBN 1-56364-616-1 Distributed by Gateway Films: Catalog # 4616D.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, D. (1998) *Celebrating Chinese New Year*. New York: Holiday House.

Chinese New Year Parade on the World Wide Web: <http://www.channelA.com>.

One Paragraph Pattern

The three main similarities* between *The Korean Cinderella*, *Cinderllla*, and *Yeh-Shen* are _____, _____, and _____. First, _____ is/was _____. For example, _____.

Second, _____ is/was _____. For example, _____.

Third, _____ was/is _____. For example, _____.

Finally, the three main similarities* between *The Korean Cinderella*, *Cinderllla*, and *Yeh-Shen* are _____, _____, and _____.

*The word differences can replace the word similarities for students who are contrasting the stories rather than comparing.

The OGT writing rubrics can be found at this website:
http://www.ode.state.oh.us/proficiency/ogt/9th_2004_Practice_Tests_Flength.asp
then clicking on Writing Practice Test Scoring Guidelines & Sample Papers ([PDF](#)).

Test Your Metric Conversion Abilities

Country	Capital	Annual Precipitation in in.	Annual Precipitation in mm	Temperature in °F	Temperature in °C	Altitude in ft.	Altitude in m
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	2274		73°		108	
Taiwan	Taipei	2016		72		29	
China	Beijing	658		53		104	
India	New Delhi	788		77		708	
Japan	Tokyo	1391		60		19	

Do not begin until the instructor says “go”. When you finish, look over your conversions carefully then call out “METRICS”. The winner, the person with the most correct answers, will receive a prize.

Adapted from *Mapping Asia: A Curriculum Unit for Grades 6 – 10*: Stanford Institute for International Studies. pp. 67

Test Your Metric Conversion Abilities

Answer Key

Country	Capital	Annual Precipitation in in.	Annual Precipitation in mm	Temperature in °F	Temperature in °C	Altitude in ft.	Altitude in m
Hong Kong	Hong Kong	2274	89	73°	23	108	33
Taiwan	Taipei	2016	78.7	72	22	29	9
China	Beijing	658	25.4	53	12	104	32
India	New Delhi	788	30.5	77	25	708	216
Japan	Tokyo	1391	54.3	60	16	19	6

Adapted from *Mapping Asia: A Curriculum Unit for Grades 6 – 10*: Stanford Institute for International Studies. pp. 67

Asian Culture Family Night Questionnaire

Directions: Please rate the following statements by circling the number that reflects your experience.

1 = strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = disagree 4 = strongly agree

1. Asian Culture Family Night was enjoyed by both my child and me.

1 2 3 4

2. Each session was well planned and organized.

1 2 3 4

3. I learned new information that I was not formerly aware of in regards to Asian Culture.

1 2 3 4

4. I would recommend that the teachers repeat Asian Culture Family Night next year.

1 2 3 4

5. I believe it is important for students to be aware of the cultures in other societies.

1 2 3 4

6. My favorite session was (circle one):

Room One:Build a Garden Room Two:Sen-Say Says: Room Three: Happy New Year

Room Four:Tangram Designs Room Five:Metrics Cafeteria:Chopsticks

Art Room:Origami Gymnasium:tai-chi instruction

7. I attended _____ sessions. (number of sessions you attended)

Comments or Suggestions:

Vocabulary List for Red Scarf Girl

tantalizing	haughty	oblivious
exemplary	elation	resolute
contemplate	noxious	medieval
oppression	mah-jongg	
pernicious	indignant	
gizzards	vulnerable	
clamor	turbulence	
exploitation	coutiers	
auspicious	phoenix	
ruthlessly	sullen	
detrimental	spate	
submissively	supplication	
chortled	acid	
fervor	dirge	
insidious	leniency	
flabbergasted	disheveled	
affront	tsars	
propagating	conspicuous	
sodden	vigorous	
pandemonium	Meniere's Disease	
listlessly	brusquely	
elite	tenuous	

