

Kathryn Benken
Korea Lesson Plan "North Korea: The Dynasty of Communism"
NCTA Oxford 2009
Life Skills Centers of Hamilton County

This lesson plan is designed for 10-12 students who have completed or are enrolled in the World History courses.

This lesson's aim is to examine "The Dynasty of Communism", the lives of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il and their control over North Korea. It will focus on their lives, at least what is known about them, and what we know about North Korea today. It will facilitate a discussion on how North Korea has accomplished a dynasty, something that no other Communist, or democratic nation has done before (Cuba could be an exception, but technically Juan Castro is just a regent). One aspect of this lesson involves the students making the connection about how isolated North Korea is from the modern world; even the basic facts about it's leader are manipulated for political reasons. And as interconnected we are in this global environment, isolation is still possible, but with what effects?

This lesson is designed to take one to two 50 minute class periods. The first day would consist mostly of direct instruction on the lives of these two men. The second day would involve the showing of a National Geographic film, *Inside North Korea*, which is about 50 minutes long.

The objectives of this lesson are for the student to: understand Kim Il Sung's rise to power and be able to recount the key events, understand the process by which Kim Il Sung transferred power to Kim Jong Il, examine and explain the differences between the father and son and be able to discuss the isolation of North Korea in today's modern, interconnected environment, especially in the political sphere.

Students will be evaluated during the lesson based on their participation during the lecture, the discussion following the video and the short answer questions at the end of the lesson.

Materials needed for this lesson will include a TV with DVD player, or a media cart with projector in order to show the video and the animated map.

Also guided notes can be passed out as a timeline, with the dates filled in and spaces for the students to write what happened in that year.

Students will be grouped in a single large group for the direct instruction and for the video. The teacher can choose to form small groups for discussion or remain in the large group.

This lesson addresses the Social Studies Academic Content Standards

Analyze the impact of conflicting political and economic ideologies after World War II that resulted in the Cold War including: the Korean War

Explain the causes and consequences of the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War including: a. The arms build-up.

To hook the students into the material, the teacher will start with some questions

The lesson will start with Kim Il Sung and a biography of his life.

1. Born on April 15, 1912, in the Pyongyang Province to a middle class family and is the eldest of 3 boys. At the time of his birth, Korea had been a protectorate of Japan for 7 years (it would be until the end of WWII). His parents move the family to Manchuria where Kim starts his Chinese education.
2. 1925 the Korean Communist Party is founded
3. 1930- Kim joins a united of the Anti-Japanese United Army, and is made a commander in 1932. He is so effective at his post that the Japanese form a special unit to hunt him down.
4. 1941- Kim is reportedly the only AJUA commander still alive and he flees to Siberia and forced to join the Soviet Army in the intelligence gathering unit.
5. 1941/1942- Kim Jong Il is born to his second wife in an army camp in Khabarovsk. (Different reports of his birth encourage different beliefs, more later)
6. In the same year, Kim Il Sung and his family return to Korea.
7. 1945- US drops the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Emperor Hirohito of Japan surrenders unconditionally, WWII and the Sino-Japanese wars end. Korea is divided at the 38th parallel into 2 military occupation zones. The US runs South Korea and the Soviet Union runs North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) Kim is selected to organize a provisional government.
8. 1946- Korean Worker's Party is a merger of the Communist Party of North Korea and the New Democratic Party of Korea. KWP introduces reforms to model the Soviet economic policies.
9. 1947- Kim Il Sung solidifies his power with the Supreme People's Assembly and the People's Committee of North Korea. UN resolutions for general elections are ignored by Kim but heeded by South Korea, which establishes the Republic of Korea. BOTH CLAIM TO BE THE ONLY LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.
10. 1948- DPRK declares its independence, Kim is head of state/government and the military and the KWP-he purges opponents to confirm his absolute rule.
11. 1949-50: The US starts withdrawing troops from South Korea, Kim believes he can re-unify Korea. USSR leader Stalin and Chinese Communist leader Mao initially discourage direct action against SK, but Stalin provides resources for a military build-up. Eventually, Kim convinces them both and on June 25, 1950 Kim invades South Korea. Within a month, North Korean forces seize all but a corner of the peninsula. However, the US led UN Command force drives them back to the border of China. The UN troops are stopped by the massing of

Chinese forces (3 million sent by Mao) and are driven back to the 38th parallel. A stalemate lasts from 1951-1953.

- a. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir2/koreanwarrev3.shtml> Animated map of the Korean War.

12. North Korean casualties number around 867,000
13. 1953- attempted overthrow of Kim by leaders of the KWP. They are convicted and executed. Another purge of the party follows; South Koreans, pro-Chinese and pro-Russians are expelled from the country or sent to political labor colonies (estimated that 150,000-200,000 political prisoners). Prisoners are accused of reading foreign newspapers, singing foreign songs or insulting the authority of Kim Il Sung
14. Kim develops the idea of 'Juche'- an ideology that demands total loyalty to the leader and stresses discipline, dedication, unity and patriotism. Through Juche, a cult of devotion forms around Kim, who is seen as the "great sun and great man", "great father", "sun of the nation", "the supreme brain of the nation" and so on. He is seen as a semi-divine leader.
15. Patterned after the Soviets, North Korea's economy surpasses South Korea's.
16. 1968 marks the beginning of several attempts on both sides to infiltrate the other. Assassination attempts are made on both leaders' lives, foreigners are held for long periods of time.
17. 1972- Kim relinquishes the Head of Government, but becomes President under a revised constitution. 300,000 North Koreans attend the opening of a museum in Kim's honor with a 21 foot tall statue of Kim- illustrating the cult surrounding him.
18. 1974 the Demilitarized Zone is enforced with 11,000 artillery pieces aimed at the south.
19. 1980 Kim Jong Il is announced as his father's successor, but North Korea has defaulted on all of its international loans minus Japan.
20. 1982- Kim Il Sung turns 70-fantastic celebrations and new monuments are unveiled while new economic policies have been announced.
21. 1983-assassination attempt on SK President Chun Doo Hwan leaves 17 dead in the bomb. NK is blamed and warned that another attempt would be seen as a declaration of war. Kim denies it, but 2 NK officials are arrested. North Korea also begins testing nuclear weapons triggers.
22. Evidence of famine can be seen in North Korea, while Kim secretly announces that the North has the technology to produce weapons grade enriched uranium.
23. 1990's: food shortages lead to rioting and rationing, the economy is in decline, power available for only a few hours a day and yet it maintains the 4th largest army in the world. Talks begin and end several times between the north and the south about reunification and trade between the two sides. Power is continually given to Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung dies suddenly on July 8, 1994 from a heart attack. Circumstance surrounding his death are shady-he was arguing with Kim Jong Il, Jong Il prevented his doctors from seeing him.
24. Kim Il Sung is still the president of North Korea-the office was retired after his death and he is known as the 'Eternal President'

Short answers question: What was Kim Il Sung's motivation for his actions prior to the Korean War?

How did he consolidate powers after the war was over?

What contributed to the cult of personality surrounding Kim Il Sung?

Kim Jong Il

1. Born in Siberian village of Khabarovsk in 1941 when his father was stationed there. However, later reports state that he was born in a military camp in 1942 (which would make him 30 years younger than his father) and that his birth was heralded by a double rainbow and a new star in the sky.
2. His education is debated as well. Some accounts say that he was educated in Korea, others argue that he was educated in China to avoid the dangers of the Korean War. He was, however, involved in politics throughout his education process.
3. 1960-began his career and Kim Il Sung University, majoring in Marxist political economy. He graduated in 1964. He might have learned English at the University of Malta in the early 1970's
4. 1964 Kim began his political career with a post in the Party Central Committee, to ensure party activities did not deviate from party lines.
5. 1967-69 Kim focused on clearing the bureaucrats from the military, several officers were expelled.
6. 1974-Kim elected to the Political Committee of the Party Central Committee and is already known as 'dear leader' Kim also becomes involved in economic planning, guiding the revolution through science and technology, and reunification of Korea.
7. 1980- Kim's control of the Party operation is complete and he has worked to eliminate bureaucracy within the party. He is granted high level positions in the Politburo, Military Commission and Secretariat.
8. 1982 Kim is declared heir apparent to succeed Kim Il Sung, and his own personality cult has sprung up, patterned after his father's. He emerges as the second most powerful figure in North Korea.
9. 1991- Kim is made supreme commander of the North Korean armed forces, and was accepted as the leader despite having no real military experience.
10. 1992- Kim Il Sung publicly declares that Kim Jong Il is in charge of all internal affairs in the DPRK.
11. North Korea is even more centralized under Kim Jong Il than it was under Kim Il Sung. Kim Jong Il views disagreement as disobedience, when Kim Il Sung sought advice from his advisors. Kim Jong Il, reportedly, likes to make all of the decisions.
12. When his father died in 1994, Kim Jong Il took the titles of General Secretary of the party and chairman of the National Defense Commission, and 'the highest post of

the state', since President was retired. He is not elected to these positions, but is unanimously elected to the Supreme People's Assembly every 5 years.

13. Faced with floods in 1995 and 1996 and then a drought in 1997, North Korea's economy has struggled, especially paired with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and China's normalization in 1992, all led to famine. Kim adopted a 'military first' campaign to rebuild the country and has led to small economic reforms.
14. 1994- North Korea and the US had agreed to freeze and dismantle NK's nuclear weapons program, but Kim Jong Il admitted in 2002 that NK had continued to produce nuclear weapons since then, citing the fact that the US had them as reason enough-security purposes.
15. Though NK agreed to a 2006 resolution banning missile testing, on April 5, 2009, North Korea launched a missile, claiming that it held a satellite. The UN has tightened sanctions against North Korea.

Unknown about Kim Jong Il

1. rumors ran that Kim Jong Il had died in 2003, and been replaced in public by body doubles and that his voice didn't match previous recordings. Other rumors say that he suffered a stroke in 2008 and might have had surgery for it. North Korean media (owned and run by the state) was silent on the fact
2. Kim Jong Il has no clear successor at the moment- he has 3 sons and one son-in-law that are possible candidates.
3. He was re-elected as leader of DPRK on April 9, 2009- making his first public appearance in over a year.
4. The cult surrounding Kim Jong Il is made up of fear and respect, for his father and fear of punishment, but is mostly hero worship.
5. He is rumored to be a womanizer, film buff, basketball fan and golfer. He appreciates the operas and musicals, has 17 houses and possibly wears lifts in his shoes.

Short Answer Questions:

What is the purpose of the air of mystery surrounding the leader? What benefits do you see? What disadvantages?

Can you see the justification for focusing on the military while the masses of people are starving?

Would you, in Kim Jong Il's place, hold true to your ideology, or go ahead and make the social/economic changes that might (or might not) relief the economic burden?

What is the benefit of having nuclear weapons? What are the disadvantages?

The second day the film will be shown. The students will have to answer the short answer questions that follow after the film is shown. If time is not on your side, they can be assigned for homework, but if appropriate, they should be filled out in class.

Inside North Korea Worksheet

Answer the questions about the video.

1. What led to the feeling of isolation as the crew arrived in Pyongyang?
2. What were some of the examples of the control Kim Jong Il has over the knowledge allowed in North Korea?
3. What is the propaganda village?
4. Why was the team threatened with expulsion from the country? Why is this offensive?
5. How are the guards set up on both sides of the DMZ? What does that tell you of either side?
6. What is the 'Stunted Generation'?
7. What is 'juche'?
8. How did the North Korean border guard cross the DMZ?
9. What were the reactions of the people when the bandages were removed from their eyes?