

China Lesson Plan
***Chinese Cinderella* Unit**
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7th Grade Language Arts

Title: *Chinese Cinderella* Unit

Materials: Novel *Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah

- Objectives:
1. Students will identify the main and minor events of the plot and explain how each incident gives rise to the next.
 2. Students will explain interactions and conflicts between main and minor characters in literary text and how the interactions affect the reader's feelings and the plot.
 3. Students will summarize the information in texts, using key ideas, supporting details, and referencing gaps or contradictions.
 4. Students will demonstrate active listening strategies.
 5. Students will deliver informal descriptive presentations in groups what convey relevant information and descriptive details.
 6. Students will analyze the features of the setting and their importance in a text.
 7. Students will predict or hypothesize as appropriate from information in the text, substantiating with specific references to textual examples that may be widely separated sections of the text.
 8. Students will apply knowledge of connotation and denotation to determine the meaning of words.
 9. Students will write responses to the novel that provide an interpretation, critique, or reflection and support judgments with specific references to the text.
 10. Students will interpret how mood or meaning is conveyed through word choice, figurative language, and syntax.
 11. Students will identify and compare subjective and objective points of view and how they affect the overall body of a work.
 12. Students will identify the author's purpose for writing and explain an author's argument, perspective, or viewpoint in the text.
 13. Students will assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of an author's details, identifying persuasive techniques and examples of bias and stereotyping.
 14. Students will analyze examples of cause and effect and fact and opinion.
 15. Students will answer literal, inferential, evaluative, and synthesizing questions to demonstrate comprehension of grade appropriate text.

16. Students will make critical comparisons across text, noting the author's style as well as literal and implied content of text.

Timeline: This unit will take approximately two-three weeks to complete depending on how in-depth you allow your class discussions to get and how many culminating activities you complete at the end.

Pre-reading Activity: Have students guess what Adeline Yen Mah's childhood is like based simply on the title of the book.

- Readings:**
1. Chapters 1-4 Pages 1-21
 2. Chapters 5-8 Pages 22-41
 3. Chapters 9-10 Pages 42-71
 4. Chapters 11-13 Pages 72-104
 5. Chapters 14-15 Pages 105-139
 6. Chapters 16-17 Pages 140-161
 7. Chapters 18-20 Pages 162-182
 8. Chapters 21-22 Pages 183-205

Each of the readings may be started in class aloud and then finished for homework. There are discussion questions, group activities, and writing activities to go with each of the readings listed above.

- Reading 1:**
- What have you discovered about the main character thus far?
 - Is this an effective opening to the novel? Is there a hook which draws us in as readers?
 - Think about the bound feet in chapter four. How strong in the sense of place and culture in the chapters that you have read so far?
 - How important are these customs to Adeline's family?
 - Is Adeline's world different than that of her grandparents? What has changed and what has stayed the same?
 - Can you think of differences between your generation and that of your grandparents?
 - Do Americans change our bodies in any way to look more beautiful? Are any of these habits or procedures painful or inconvenient?

- Reading 2:**
- On the board as a class or in small groups: Do a T-chart showing what we know about Adeline's character so far and what we know about Niang's character so far. Make sure to show the differences between them.
 - Prediction: How do you think Adeline's and Niang's relationship will develop?

- Reading 3:**
- What are the main differences between the way the original five children are treated from that of their step-siblings?

- Why is Aunt Baba treated the way she is by Niang?
- How does Adeline feel about this?

- Reading 4:
- Adeline is provided with a pet to love. In pairs, list the number of ways in which Adeline shows her love for PLT.
 - Now find examples of personification where Adeline presents PLT as being almost human, suggesting that he loves Adeline back.
 - On pages 99-102, what language does she use to create sympathy and pity for herself and for PLT?
 - Why do you think Adeline's father chooses to test Jackie's obedience in such a brutal way?
 - At what times does Adeline's father notice her? How does this contribute to our opinion of his character?

- Reading 5:
- How does Adeline's feelings of school contrast with her feelings about her home? How does this heighten her misery at home?
 - In small groups, have the students discuss the methods that the author uses here to evoke our sympathy.

- Reading 6:
- What might life had been like for Adeline had she not been collected by Aunt Reine?
 - Do you think her parents were aware of her possible fate?
 - Chapter 16 shows the contrast between the way Aunt Reine and Niang treat Adeline. What are the differences in treatment?

- Reading 7:
- How is Adeline's sense of isolation built up in chapters 17 and 18?
 - Look at: how our response is played with, the characters and their roles, the pace and how it is controlled by the author, and the use of description and dialogue.

- Reading 8:
- In small groups, draw as many links as you can between Adeline's story and the original Chinese Cinderella story as told by Aunt Baba.
 - How is Adeline a Chinese Cinderella?
 - Education and freedom are qualities of key importance to Adeline. How important are these two qualities to each other, for example, can you have freedom without education?

Culminating Questions and Activities (Choose any combination of the following):

- Have a class discussion about the meaning of courage. Then have the students write a paragraph describing the scene they believe Adeline shows the most courage. They also need to include why they feel this is the scene where she displays the most courage. Discuss how Adeline's success in school contributes to her courage. How does it take courage to write a book like *Chinese Cinderella*? Is Adeline ever weak?
- Discuss the connotation of the word "stepchild." How is Adeline treated

like a “stepchild” even before Niang marries her father? How has the perception of stepfamilies changed over the years? When do Adeline’s siblings begin to change their attitudes toward her? Do they become nicer because they need an ally or because their feelings for her actually change?

- Have students look again at Mother Teresa’s statement in the preface, “Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted are the greatest poverty.” Discuss whether Adeline feels lonelier at home or when she is abandoned and sent away. How does loneliness affect a person’s self-concept? Is Aunt Baba a lonely person? Does she need Adeline as much as Adeline needs her?
- Adeline says, “I was the female warrior Mulan.” (p. 47) Watch Mulan and discuss how Adeline relates to the character of Mulan.
- Adeline is telling us the story of her life. Is she a reliable narrator? What do you think of her writing style?

Research Projects students can do to extend their thinking:

- Read *A Little Princess* and write an essay on why Adeline relates so well to the main character Sara Crewe.
- Research Chinese New Year. What is its origin? How is it celebrated? How long does it last? What are the special events on each day?
- Have students find out his or her animal on the Chinese zodiac. Have students write on the qualities their sign represents along with the qualities that relate to their character.

Resources:

"Chinese Cinderella Adeline Yen Mah Group Reading Year 8." Chinese Cinderella Adeline Yen Mah. 2003. Crown. 12 Apr 2008

<www.nate.org.uk/uploads/other/0000044.pdf>.

"Chinese Cinderella by Adeline Yen Mah." Cinderella-Talk It Up! Book Discussion Groups for Kids. 14 April 2008. Multnomah County Library . 10 Apr 2008 <<http://www.multcolib.org/talk/guides-chinese.html>>.

"Chinese Cinderella: The True Story of an Unwanted Daughter Teacher's Guide." Teachers at Random. 2004. Random House, Inc.. 10 Apr 2008 <<http://randomhouse.com/teachers/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=9780440228653&view=tg>>.

Hogdson Burnett, Francis. *A Little Princess*. Great Britain: Warne, 1905.

Mulan. Dir. Tony Bancroft and Barry Cook. DVD. Walt Disney Feature Animation, 1998.

Yen Mah, Adeline. *Chinese Cinderella*. New York: Dell Laurel-Leaf, 1999.