

Which Chinese dynasty was *better*, Song or Ming ?

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Topic: Persuasive Writing

Subject: English Language Arts

Grade: 7th Grade

Materials:

Student 7th Grade Social Studies Textbook

Library Set of Books on the Song and Ming Dynasties

Computer Access

List of websites (See appendix.)

Persuasive Writing Standards:

	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
7.W.1a	Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
7.W.1b	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
7.W.1c	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
7.W.1d	Establish and maintain a formal style.
7.W.1e	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Convention Standards:

Students will demonstrate all appropriate conventions of writing including formal style, and each must write a concluding statement that supports the original persuasive thesis statement.

7.L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
7.L.1b	Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.
7.L.1c	Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.
7.L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
7.L.2b	Spell correctly.
7.L.3a	Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

Which Chinese dynasty was *better*, Song or Ming ?

Rationale:

These are two dynasties the students study in their social studies class. There certainly could be different choices, and maybe I will modify the choice at students' request, but I want them to compare two dynasties to narrow the search.

I have purposely used the ambiguous term *better* to accelerate the discussion. In determining *better*, students are required to make judgments as well as research information. What is most important? Land acquisition? Economic prosperity? Cultural advancements? Education? Human rights? These are discussions that need to be addressed. I will guide, but I want the discussion to be student-generated as much as possible.

To indicate mastery of persuasive writing skills, students will write the paper independently.

Procedure:

Days 1 & 2:

Collaborating within a four-group team, students will research both dynasties using no less than three sources for each dynasty. Using file cards, students will gather relevant information they discover about each dynasty. Students must document the sources as they gather information to reference in their paper later. Students will place the information cards into four piles: one pile for supporting each dynasty, one pile with the negative of each dynasty. Like this:

+ Song	-- Song	+ Ming	-- Ming

Students will read through the information together, and then discuss their conclusions and arguments.

Days 3, 4, 5:

The research for this project will be collaborative, but each student will be responsible for independently writing his or her own paper to present evidence of mastering the 7th grade writing standards.

The student will receive a formulaic guide to write this paper.

1. OUTLINE

- Each student must write a thesis statement, based on his or her opinion about the *better* dynasty.
- This opinion must be supported by specific facts, quotes, examples, or descriptions.
- Students will then outline the paper.
 - Thesis statement
 - At least four (4) Proofs

Which Chinese dynasty was *better*, Song or Ming ?

- Specific contrasting Argument (Some may say that ____ is better, but ...)

2. THE PAPER

Paragraph One: Introduction of thesis

Paragraph Two: Evidence supporting chosen dynasty

Paragraph Three: Refutation evidence for chosen dynasty

Paragraph Four: Conclusion with summation of choice.

Assessment:

- Before we begin the final writing, students (with teacher guidance) will write their own rubric to assess the assignment. . The rubric for the assignment will be student-generated based on knowledge of standards, and it will only contain mastery goals as a score of 5 for each element. The rest of the score will be weighed by the teacher in relation to how close they come to mastery. This score will be included in their mastery portfolio to be compared with other assessments.
 - Guidelines:
 - 4 paragraphs
 - Capitalization
 - Punctuation
 - Grammar
 - Spelling
 - Diversity of sentences (simple, complex, compound, compound-complex)
 - Student’s support must be organized, and evidence presented accurately and logically. Students must document at least three credible sources, and demonstrate understanding of the topic
 - This is an independent writing. All editing will be each student’s responsibility. The essay will be computer-generated, so spell/grammar check will be available for editing.

Prior Content: Students will write this paper after they have studied the dynasties in social studies class. We will do a “commercial assignment” to practice our persuasive writing skills before we tackle this essay.

Follow Through: Students who do not master this skill will be given an opportunity to relearn and rewrite this paper.

Appendix:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIC4zom3w0g&index=11&list=PLC8ACBA72AB38CB21>

<https://www.historysimulation.com/the-mongol-conquests.html>

<http://www.chinaknowledge.de/>

<http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Song/song.html>

<http://www.chinaknowledge.de/History/Ming/ming.html>

<http://teacup.media/the-china-history-podcast/>