

Teacher Implementation Plan: China

Course: Modern World

Topic: Contemporary China

Lesson Title: Influence of Classic Chinese Philosophy on China's Leadership Today

Time Frame: 1-2 class periods

Materials:

1. Confucius, *The Analects*, Dover Publishing, New York, 1995.
2. Background notes or powerpoint on Chinese philosophical traditions such as:
www.pptpalooza.net/PPTs/GlobalStudies/Confucianism-Legalism-Taoism.ppt
3. Buckley, Chris. "Leader Taps Into Chinese Classics in Seeking to Cement Power." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 11 Oct. 2014. Web. 17 July 2016.
4. Examples of current events from in Chinese politics and society--youtube, websites, or short articles.

Objectives:

1. Compare classic Chinese political philosophies
2. Understand contemporary Chinese leadership

Overview:

Students will learn about classic Chinese political philosophies, especially those of Confucius and Legalism (reviewing from Middle School). Students will then analyze the words, policies, and actions of contemporary Chinese leaders to understand how classic ideas continue to influence them.

Day One:

1. Remind students of the long history of China and its influential philosophers of the classic era. Present students with a short overview of some of the key ideas of political philosophy of Confucius and the Legalists (and possibly others). If appropriate, also compare/contrast these with Western political philosophies which the class has studied.
2. Ask students to predict how these ideas might influence political leaders today. Present them with a current political and social issue from China and predict how China's leaders might deal with it if they followed the ideas of Confucius or Legalists.
3. Read the article. "Leader Taps Into Chinese Classics in Seeking to Cement Power" silently or out loud (whatever best fits your class's needs). Discuss:
 - a. How is President Xi similar to or different from other modern Chinese leaders?
 - b. How is Xi emulating Confucianism? Legalism?
 - c. What evidence is there that Confucian influence is increasing in Chinese society?
 - d. Why is Confucianism becoming more popular?
4. Give students (individual, groups, or whole class) examples of issues that China is grappling with, such as pollution, protests, unemployment, changing economy, etc.) Have them write a speech from the perspective of President Xi on the topic and how it

July 2016

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should be resolved, following the advice of the classic philosophers. Students can share orally or the teacher can collect and grade for understanding.

Extensions:

Compare perspectives and actions of Xi to American and other Western leaders.

TED talk [A Tale of Two Political Systems](#)

National and Ohio Standards

1. Describe ways in which art, literature, religion, and traditional customs have expressed or strengthened national or other communal loyalties in recent times.
2. Assess the degree to which both human rights and democratic ideals and practices have been advanced in the world during the 20th century.
3. Analyze causes and consequences of continuing urban protest and reformist economic policies in post-Mao China in the context of state authoritarianism.
4. The rapid increase of global population coupled with an increase in life expectancy and mass migrations have created societal and governmental challenges.