

China: A Unique Political History

Purpose:

Explore how the Chinese political history is different from the Greek political history.

What role is expected by leaders governing the citizens?

What is expected by different parts of society?

How is the Mandate from Heaven similar to and different from Social Contract Theory?

Rationale:

Develop a greater understanding of the concept of “the will of the people” and what is civic virtue?

Materials:

A copy for each student of “Heaven, Earth, and Man” as found in Chinese Civilization Edited by Patricia Buckley Ebrey

Paper for each student

Black/White board

Activities:

The basic problem that has led to the need for government is one person’s actions hurting another.

1. Divide the chalkboard in two to write down as the students brain storm.
2. Remind the students what brain storming is and how to do it
3. Pose the question; “Why do we have government?”
4. Write student responses on the board.
5. Ask “How should the government lead the people to “do the right thing?”
6. Write responses on the board
7. Explain that our western tradition places self interest ahead of communal interest. Of the responses on the board which reflect that tradition. Are there any that reflect the opposite?
8. Pass out reading and have the students read it silently.
9. Have them write out how balance is maintained
10. Review as a class
11. .

Assessment:

The Venn diagram will serve as the assessment

Grade Adaptation:

Government 11

World History 9

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Further Reading:

Web reading about the Mandate from Heaven

<http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/GLOSSARY/TIENMING.HTM>

The Social Contract by John Locke