

Lesson Plan

Analyzing Reactions to Western/Modern Incursions into Asia in the 19th Century through Primary Sources

Resources: Modern East Asia; A Cultural, Social, and Political History From 1600. 2d Ed. Ebrey, Walthall & Palais. Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston and New York (2009)

Grade Level: 6th & 7th

Duration: 4 Days

Overview: This lesson will examine, compare and contrast different reactions to the incursion of Western/ “modern” ideas as well as military and economic policies into China, Japan and Korea in the 19th century through the use of primary sources, specifically, Ch’oe Cheu’s “Tonghak Beliefs” (1860), (Korea), Fukuzawa Yukichi’s “Leaving Asia” (1885) (Japan), and Mai Menghua’s “Comparing the Power of China & Western Nations” (1898) (China).

Day 1: Read: “Tonghak Beliefs”, from Ebrey, p. 358 and assign the accompanying questions.

Day 2: Discuss students’ answers to questions and read: “Leaving Asia”, from Ebrey, p. 350. Assign the accompanying questions.

Day 3: Discuss students’ answers to questions and read: “Comparing the Power of China and the Western Nations”, from Ebrey, p. 318. Assign the accompanying questions.

Day 4: Discuss students’ answers to questions. Assign the accompanying questions as a cumulative assessment of the unit.

Michigan Grade Level Expectations (6th and 7th grades:

HI.2.3 Identify the point of view (perspective of the author) and context when reading and discussing primary and secondary sources.

HI.2.4 Compare and evaluate competing historical perspectives about the past based on proof.

HI.2.6 Identify the role of the individual in history and the significance of one person’s ideas.

HI.4.1 Describe and use cultural institutions to study an era and a region (political, economic, religion/belief, science/technology, written language, education, family).

HI.4.2 Describe themes of history to study patterns of change and continuity.

HI.4.3 Use historical perspectives to analyze global issues faced by humans long ago and today.

Tonghak Beliefs Questions

After reading Ch'oe Cheu's "Tonghak Beliefs", answer the following questions in complete sentences:

1. According to Ch'oe Cheu, what does the "Lord of Heaven" regulate?
2. Based on the above, who do you think the "Lord of Heaven" is?
3. What did Ch'oe Cheu worry about night and day?
4. What did Ch'oe Cheu learn in 1860?
5. How did Ch'oe Cheu achieve his revelation?
6. Why did the Lord of Heaven send Ch'oe Cheu into the world?
7. Did the Lord of Heaven want Ch'oe Cheu to teach people the Western way to do things?
8. What national disaster was sweeping across Korea at this time?
9. Did people listen to Ch'oe Cheu?
10. Who do you believe Ch'oe Cheu blames more for Korea's problems, the West or Korea's own people? Explain and support your answer with specific references from the passage.

Answers to “Tonghak Beliefs” Questions

1. Answer: The changes and transformations in the universe.
2. Answer: Western notions of God.
3. Answer: That people tended to do whatever they felt like doing instead of acting in accordance with heavenly principles. They no longer paid attention to the decrees of heaven.
4. Answer: That Westerners, claiming that they were only doing what the Lord of Heaven wanted them to do and not trying to be rich and lord it over others, began using military force to seize territory all over the world.
5. Answer: A sudden chill came over his heart and his whole body shivered. Then his ears seemed to pick up a strange voice that sounded like the voice of one of those immortals who lives deep in the mountains.
6. Answer: So he could teach human beings the right way to do things.
7. Answer: No
8. Answer: Terrible diseases.
9. Answer: No. They didn't understand the precarious situation they were in and they even started to criticize him publicly.
10. Answers will vary.

“Leaving Asia” Questions

1. Who was Fukuzawa Yukichi?
2. What does Fukuzawa claim that Japan has “shaken off” that China and Korea has not? What has it accepted in its place?
3. While Fukuzawa states that China and Korea have been brought up like Japan since olden times in the Asian culture and customs, what does he say are the causes for China and Korea to resemble each other more than they do Japan?
4. How does Fukuzawa claim China and Korea still frame as their principles of school education?
5. What does Fukuzawa believe will be the fate of China and Korea if they do not institute political reforms?
6. Give three (3) examples Fukuzawa cites as to how “civilized western man” might regard China, Korea and Japan as being identical.
7. Rather than wait for the enlightenment of China and Korea, what does Fukuzawa believe Japan should do?
8. Who do you believe Fukuzawa thinks would be more important for instituting “reforms” in China and Korea, the government or the people? Explain and support your answer with specific references to the text.
9. How does Fukuzawa believe Japan should act towards China and Korea? Explain and support your answer with specific references to the text.
10. What do you think Fukuzawa means by the title of his essay, “Leaving Asia? Explain and support your answer with specific references to the text.

“Leaving Asia” Answers

1. The most prominent intellectual and promoter of westernization of Meiji Japan.
2. The backwardness of Asia. The civilization of the West.
3. They are of another racial origin and they differ from Japan in the main lines of their traditional education.
4. In terms of Confucianism, cite humanity, justice, civility, and wisdom.
5. That they will meet their doom in a few years and their territories will be divided among the civilized countries of the world.
6. Answers will vary but might include: since China and Korea are old-fashioned autocracies without abiding laws, they will think that Japan also is a lawless country; when they find that the gentlemen of China and Korea are too infatuated to know what science is, they will think that Japan is, also tied to old beliefs; when Chinese display their servility and shamelessness and Koreans employ cruel means of physical punishment, they will think that Japan will be just as inhuman.
7. Join the ranks of civilized countries of the West.
8. Answers will vary.
9. Rather than wait for their neighbors to reform or cooperate in building up Asia, Japan should have no scruples and behave toward China and Korea the way the westerners do.
10. Answers will vary but should include a discussion of modernizing Japan and fashioning it along western models.

Questions for “Comparing the Power of China and Western Nations”

1. Who was Mai Menghua and when did he write “Comparing the Power of China and Western Nations?”
2. According to Mai, why do “men of broad learning” believe China is weak?
3. Why does Mai believe China is weak?
4. List five examples used by Mai to demonstrate the difference in power between the Chinese Emperor and Western governments.
5. Does Mai believe that China should imitate the Western Power? Why or why not?
6. Do you agree with Mai’s assessment of the relative powers of the Chinese Emperor and the Western nation? Why or why not?

Answers to Questions for “Comparing the Power of China and Western Nations”

1. Mai Menghua was a twenty four year old follower of Kang Youwei (an advocate of reform). He wrote it in 1898.
2. Because the power of the Chinese ruler is mighty and the power of the people is slight while in the Western nations the power of the government is slight and the power of the people is great.
3. Mai believes China’s misfortunes arise not because the power of the people is slight but, rather, because the Chinese Emperor has no power.
4.
 - a. Age, birth and death of every person in every household is reported to officials in the West. Not so in China.
 - b. Property inherited in the West must be reported and taxes paid on it. Not so in China.
 - c. Education is compulsory in the West. Not so in China.
 - d. Currency is uniform throughout the Western nations. Not so in China.
 - e. In the West, only the government may print paper money. Not so in China. Individual banks can print own money.
In the West, buildings must be constructed to safety codes. Not so in China.
 - f. In the West, the government maintains highways. Not so in China.
 - g. In the West, the government regulates the practice of medicine. Not so in China.
 - h. In the West, the government regulates the postal service. Not so in China.
 - i. In the West, the government regulates the quality of merchandise sold. Not so in China.
5. Answers will vary.
6. Answers will vary.

Culmination Question

1. Compare and contrast the views of Ch'oe Cheu, Fukuzawa Yukichi, and Mai Menghua in their respective essays. How did each view the West and modernization? How did each view Asia? What did each believe was necessary for their respective countries to succeed in the future? Your answer should also address the role of the individual, the people and the governments of each country.

Answers will vary.

Objectives:

1. Students will examine primary source material to compare and contrast the efforts of China, Japan and Korea to cope with modernization and the Western colonial expansion.
2. Students will identify the point of view (perspective of the author) and context when reading and discussing primary and secondary sources.
3. Students will compare and evaluate competing historical perspectives about the past based on proof.
4. Students will identify the role of the individual in history and the significance of one person's ideas.
5. Students will describe and use cultural institutions to study an era and a region (political, economic, religion/belief, science/technology, written language, education, family).
6. Students will describe themes of history to study patterns of change and continuity.
7. Students will use historical perspectives to analyze global issues faced by humans long ago and today.