



All Roads Lead to China
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Rockbridge County Schools



Topic: Ancient China, Written Language, Inventions, Contributions of ancient China.

Overview

This lesson will introduce students to the written language of China through a variety of video and web-based activities. Students will participate in hands-on activities that allow them to comprehend the complexity of the Chinese written language. Students will recognize how the invention of paper furthered the Chinese written language. At the completion of the lesson students will be able to recognize and use some simple Chinese characters.

Grade 2

Time Allotment

Two 30-minute periods

Learning Objectives

On completion of this lesson students will be able to:

- Explain that ancient people made contributions that affect the present world.
- Explain that many inventions of ancient China are still used today.

This lesson addresses Va. SOLs History 2.1 and English 2.11.

Media Components

- Computer and projection device
- Computers with Internet access
- Video clip - Stories from China: Land and People. Discovery School Channel 1996. United Learning. <http://wvpt.unitedstreaming.com> Segment used: Write Chinese
- Websites:
 - <http://www.freechinesenames.com>
 - Print out your name in Chinese
 - <http://www.ibiblio.org/chinese-music/>
 - Downloadable Chinese Music
 - <http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/DimSum%20T.ofCon.HomePg.html>
 - Chinese-American Culture Website
 - <http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/Chinese%20Calligraphy%20Lesson.html>
 - writing Chinese ideograms, appropriate for grades K-5, includes: character chart (ideograms) worksheet , 3 Internet links
 - <http://library.thinkquest.org/3614/intro.htm>
 - This site is designed to introduce children to Chinese calligraphy
 - <http://www.wavedancing.net/gallery/movie/chinesecalligraphybairi.htm>
 - free 3 minute movie demonstrating the art of Chinese calligraphy

Optional:

- Interactive White Board (SMARTBoard)

Teacher Preparations

- Download and cue video from wvpt.unitedstreaming.com
- Duplicate student handout
- Write a short rebus story using Chinese Characters
- Duplicate and/or enlarge Chinese Writing Poster
- Bookmark websites

Introductory Activity

1. Provide students with a blank piece of paper. Tell the students that you would like them to share with you what they did after school yesterday. Explain to them that there is just one problem. They can not speak or write (use the alphabet). Allow students 5 minutes to brainstorm and record their solutions.

Learning Activities

1. Focus: We have been learning about Ancient China and how many of the things they discovered or invented are still used today. Today we are going to watch a short video clip to learn about another contribution of the Chinese.

Play: Stories from China: Land and People segment: Write Chinese.

Pause after you hear, “What do you think of when you hear about the country of China?” (Counter 00:30)

Follow-up: Record student responses to this question on the board or chart paper.

2. Focus: Listen to find out one of the things Chinese value most about their culture.

Play/Pause: after you see and hear the words “It’s called calligraphy” (Counter 00:41)

Follow-up: What do the Chinese value a great deal? (Possible student response – Writing or Calligraphy) Why do you think this is so?

3. Focus: The Chinese don’t use an alphabet like ours. How is theirs different?

Play/Pause: (Counter 01:25)

Follow-up: What is the Chinese written language based on? (pictures) Do you think this is easier or harder than ours?

4. Focus: Today we are going to learn how to write in Chinese. Watch to see if you can identify the five principals of Chinese writing.

Play: (Counter 02:55)

Pause: (Counter 3:10) after you hear “...so you don’t have any extra weight on one part of the body.” Ask the students to recall the first principal. Have students practice correct posture. Ask students what they think might happen if correct posture isn’t used.

5. Focus: Say “The second principle is knowledge of tools and strokes. Listen to learn what tools are needed to write in Chinese.

Play: (counter 3:10).

Stop: after you hear “...or you might have an accident”. (Counter 4:04)

Follow-up: What are the tools needed to write Chinese? (*brush, ink and paper*). How is a Chinese calligraphy brush similar/different than a classroom paint brush. (*Both have a handle and bristles. Calligraphy brush is made of bamboo and animal hair and has a reservoir for ink.*)

6. Focus: Restate the first two principles and ask the students to listen for the third principle.

Play: (Counter 4:04)

Pause: after you hear "... A lot of practice"(Counter 4:13)

Follow-up: Did you have to practice when you were learning out alphabet?

7. Focus: Listen as we find out about the last two principles of Chinese writing.

Play: (Counter 4:13)

Stop after you hear "...all of the lines are in the right place." (Counter 04:33)

Follow-up: What are the last two principles? (Rhythm and Balance)

8. Focus: You may choose to have students work in small groups. Pass out student handout, paint brushes and small cups of paint to students. Review the five principles:

Posture

Knowledge of tools & strokes

Control of the brush – takes practice

Finding a rhythm

Drawing characters in a balanced way

(To make the experience more authentic, you might have the students mix powdered tempera paint with water and glue to resemble the ink of the Ancient Chinese.)

Activity: Demonstrate how to hold the brush (upright-without a slant) and the strokes for several simple symbols. Have students copy each symbol in the space provided.

Follow-up: Have the students compare and contrast Chinese written language to English.

key points: Chinese uses symbols (characters) English uses letters, Both take practice to master. Both are forms of communication.

Extension Activity 1: Make a Counting book of numbers 1 -10. Illustrate with items from Chinese culture. (dragons, chopsticks, kites, fireworks) Chinese numbers can be found at: <http://library.thinkquest.org/3614/intro.htm>

Extension Activity 2: Calligraphy Writing – Name in Chinese – internet activity

- <http://www.freechinesenames.com>

Culminating Activity

Focus: Yesterday we learned that the Chinese use symbols in their written language. Today we are going to use the symbols we learned to read and then write a Rebus story.

Activity: Have students use the Chinese Writing poster or go to the internet to find symbols to use in their stories. <http://library.thinkquest.org/3614/intro.htm>

Follow Up: Have the students share read each others stories.

Assessment

- Informal ongoing observation during the learning activities. Did the students participate in the writing activities? Was the student able to use Chinese symbols correctly to communicate an idea in the rebus story?
- Formal assessment should follow at the end of the unit and include Chinese written language, inventions, and contributions as well as the location of China on a world map and globe.

Community Connections

- Plan a field trip to a Chinese Restaurant and/or Chinese food market.

Cross-Curricular Extension Ideas

Math

- Discuss Chinese use of the abacus and tangrams. Demonstrate use of each.

Language Arts

- Compare and Contrast Folktales
Yeh-Shen – Cinderella
Lon PoPo – Little Red Riding Hood
- Learning Station Ideas
Chopsticks – pick up items
Tangram Puzzle Pictures
Compass – Make a floating compass
Chinese Character Chart

<http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/Chinese%20Character%20Lesson.html>

About the Author

Susan Elkins-Mahood is a teacher at Mountain View Elementary in Rockbridge County.

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Chinese Character Chart

老豆知道我日日送咗蟹
鍾激死佢 如果扑過我嘅
以由蘭桂坊推到皇后戲院

Copy the Chinese characters or ideograms for sun, moon, mountain, rain and tree onto white paper.

Student Handout

Name _____ Date _____

