Day 1: Introduction to China

**OACS**

**Standard**: 6th Grade Social Studies

**Strand**: History

**Topic**: Early Civilizations

**Content** **Statement**: 2 – Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Standard**: 6th Grade Social Studies

**Strand**: History

**Topic**: Historical Thinking and Skills

**Content** **Statement**: 1 – Events can be arranged in order of occurrence using the conventions of B.C. and A.D. or B.C.E. and C.E.

**Common Core**

**Standard**: 6-8th Grade English Language Arts (Common Core)

**Strand**: History/Social Studies

**Topic**: Craft and Structure

**Content** **Statement**: 6-8.4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

**Objectives**

The students will be able to identify some cultural aspects of China today, including government, economics, social structure, technology, agriculture, and geography.

The students will be able to recognize China’s history as going back thousands of years.

The students will be able to use a timeline.

**Intro**

Class will start with students doing a quick brainstorm in pairs about what they know about China. They can share with their table after brainstorming for 2 minutes. As a class, make a chart of key ideas about what they know about China.

**Lesson Activities**

Talk about how this will be a unit where we will be looking at ancient China but to begin we’re going to see where China is today. Read the picture book, A to Z China, and ask students to pay attention to ideas or concepts that they already knew and did not know. Have a brief discussion about connections from students.

Have students get out their learning logs and create a chart on the right hand side. Include the following headings: government, social structure, economic system, agriculture, technology, and religion. Students will begin to do a station rotation. Each station will have items, articles, books, etc. to expose kids to China today, in order to help them connect what they will be learning about ancient China to today. Tell students to take notes for themselves (in the form of pictures, bulleted lists, or other means) on the different categories. ***(Resources listed in annotated bibliography)***

Before moving on, ask students to share some important elements of Chinese culture today with a partner. Haave them focus on Listen to the conversations to assess if students understand the concept.

**Closure**

Pass out a blank time line that students will put in their learning logs. Have students mark on the timeline this year. Talk about how they will be studying ancient China and to do this, knowing how long ago China existed would be helpful. Give a list of dates for when China’s civilization started and some notable dynasties and ask them to fill in the dates. Use this as an informal assessment to see if students understand how B.C.E. and C.E. work. For those that do no, talk about what B.C.E. and C.E. stand for and help them use the timeline. Tell kids to use this as a reference to help them understand how long ago the different events happened and as a place for them to jot down important ideas to help make sense of their studies of ancient China.

**Annotated Bibliography**

**Fontes, J & R. (2003). *A to Z China*. United States of America: Scholastic Inc.**

This picture book uses the alphabet to introduce various concepts about Chinese culture. Some categories of interest are government, exports, land, map, religion, people, etc. Some geography concepts can be included, such as places (cities, buildings), regions (people, maps), movement of people and ideas (exports)

*General Info:*

**China (n.d.). Fact Monster.com. Retrieved July 31, 2013 from:** [**http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0107411.html**](http://www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0107411.html)**.**

This site has a variety of basic information about China, including information about religion, agriculture, economics, and government.

**China facts for kids. (n.d.). A China family adventure. Retrieved on August 1, 2013 from:** [**http://www.china-family-adventure.com/china-facts.html**](http://www.china-family-adventure.com/china-facts.html)

This site includes information about government, economics, and religion.

*Government*:

**Government. (n.d.). infoplease.com. Retrieved on August 1, 2013 from:** [**http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/china-government.html**](http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/china-government.html)

The site explains the basics of the current government with a brief description of current history of the government.

*Social* *Structure*:

**Yi, Z. (March, 07, 2012). New changes in China’s social class structure. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** [**http://english.people.com.cn/102780/7750165.html**](http://english.people.com.cn/102780/7750165.html)**.**

This article explains social classes of China and how it is changing with more industrial working class from farmers. There is also discussion of lower class versus upper class and how people identify themselves.

**Chinese cultural studies: Women in China: Past and the present. (n.d.). Chinese culture. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** [**http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/chinwomn.html**](http://acc6.its.brooklyn.cuny.edu/~phalsall/texts/chinwomn.html)

This is a longer text that might be a little higher reading level but has a lot of good information about the family role in modern Chinese society, some history to explain this, the role of women in China, and divorce rates. It is a compilation of a few articles addressing each issue.

*Religion*:

**Major religions in China. (n.d.). *About China*. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** <http://english.people.com.cn/92824/92845/92875/6442434.html>

This is a very brief introduction into the different religions practiced in China today. It includes information about Buddhism, Toaism, Islam, Catholicism, and Christianity.

*Agriculture*:

**Crops in China: Grain, imports, exports and GM crops. (n.d.). Facts and details. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** [**http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=345**](http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=345)

This site explains major crops of China, including differences in different regions of China. There are also some links to further information.

**Hsu, Cho-yun. (n.d.). Agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** [**http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/111803/China/70998/Agriculture-forestry-and-fishing**](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/111803/China/70998/Agriculture-forestry-and-fishing).

This site talks about some of the current agriculture techniques used in China as well as the culture around farming.

*Technology*:

**Aston, A. (December 07, 2010). 7 technologies where China has the U.S. beat. Retrieved on August 2, 2013 from:** [**http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2010/12/07/7-technologies-where-china-has-us-beat**](http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2010/12/07/7-technologies-where-china-has-us-beat)**.**

This article explains some of the new technologies where China is advancing today, including supercomputers, high-speed rail, advanced coal techniques and more.

(There are lots of other ideas and opportunities to explore this topic more on the web)

*Economic* *System*:

**Economy. (n.d.). infoplease.com. Retrieved on August 1, 2013 from:** [**http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/china-economy.html**](http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/china-economy.html)

This is more advanced in reading level but discusses current economics in China. It includes a discussion about agriculture and how crops rank. There are discussions of minerals and other exports.