

# Colonialism in China: Kowtow or Bow

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## Grade Level/Discipline

This lesson plan was created for high school social studies classes  
This lesson plan could also be applied to world history classes.

## PASS Standards/Social Studies

Standard 1: The student will evaluate how societies answer the three basic economic questions: what goods and services to produce, how to produce them and for whom are they produced?

1. Examine the different economic systems used to allocate resource, goods and services and wealth in other countries around the world. ..
2. Compare the relative size and responsibilities of governments in different countries.

Standard 2: The student will explain how prices are set in a market economy by using supply and demand graphs, and determine how prices provide incentives to buyers and sellers.

1. Determine how price and nonprice factors affect the demand and supply of goods and services available in the marketplace.

## Introduction

Before 1842, the Chinese were the self-proclaimed “civilized” people. All foreigners were considered “barbarians” by the Chinese; who before that time had only tributary relations with the Chinese. British merchants as well as other “industrialized” powers sought to push trade with the Chinese. The Chinese felt that the “barbarians” had nothing of value to trade. The commodity the British discovered that did have a great effect on their ability to leverage trade relations with the Chinese was opium.

## Objectives

### Knowledge-

1. Students will learn that as power weakens in a government, power grows or spreads elsewhere.
2. Students will learn about China’s valued commodities: tea, silk, porcelain, and fireworks.
3. Students will learn about how and why the opium was introduced into the Chinese society and by whom.

### Skills-

1. Students will learn to read color-coded maps denoting colonial powers in Asia during that time.

2. Students will learn about the importance of trade and finding leverage when trading.

#### Attitude-

1. Colonialism is a natural progression to expanding ones' power; but also brings shame.
2. It is only natural for a culture to fight vigorously to maintain its' own identity. Especially when the fabric of its' social conscious is nearly destroyed by opium.

#### Time Allotment

Two class periods

#### Resources Needed

A color-coded map of "Colonized Asia" can be found on the internet at the [afe.easia.columbia.edu](http://afe.easia.columbia.edu) site.

Students will be asked to bring an item from home that is of value to them.(Used in an activity to trade)

#### Procedure

1. Let the students understand that China suffered due to the weakness of their emperors and corrupt officials.
2. Introduce a brief history of modern China beginning from 1800-1919.
3. Discuss with the students the Opium War from 1839-1842 and how it came about.
4. Have the students take out their "valuable" items they brought from home.
5. As a trader would do, have them come up with ideas on how one might find a common ground to trade with another.
6. Randomly divide the class into 2 groups. One representing China, and the other representing the U.S.
7. Discuss briefly how China's power was waning as the U.S. was growing.
8. Have the students brainstorm ideas on how they could compel or entice the other group to trade with them.
9. Have each group take all of the items and place them together. Have them discuss their perceived value of this item.
10. After each student has done this, the trading can begin.

#### Resource List

Teng, Ssuyu and Fairbank, John, *China's Response to the West* -Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria by Lin Tse-Hsu in 1839-Primary Resource, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1954.

Kipling, Ruyard, "The Whiteman's burden," McClure's Magazine 12 1899.

Hsu, Francis L.K., *Americans and Chinese: Passage to Differences*.  
Bookman Books, Ltd. 1981.

Dane, Sir Richard, *China and the So-Called Opium War*, The Asiatic Review: 611-624.

#### Assessment

Students will be required to write a 4 page paper on  
the good and bad effects of colonialism in Asia.

Students will be given a test on the time-line and "players"  
involved in China's history from 1800-1919.

