

Taoism: “There must be an opposition in all things.”

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Grade Level/Discipline

This lesson plan was created for high school Chinese language classes. This lesson could also be applicable to world religion, social studies, or philosophy classes.

PASS Standards/Social Studies

Standard 7: The student will describe, compare and contrast selected civilizations in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

1. Analyze India’s caste system, the traditions, customs, beliefs, and significance of Hinduism, and the conquest by Muslim Turks and Mongols.
2. Describe China under the Qin, Han, T’ang, and Sung dynasties; the traditions, customs, beliefs, and significance of Buddhism; the impact of Confucianism and Taoism; and the construction of the Great Wall.

INTRODUCTION

Taoism is an ancient religion that not only deals with practical approaches to life, but also a mystic view of those things that are not seen but do exist.

OBJECTIVES

Knowledge-

1. Students will learn why Taoism was important to the Chinese and their ancestors.
2. Students will learn the basic principles of Taoism and about the founder of Taoism, Lao zi and Zhuang Chou.
3. Students will learn about the two texts: “The Tao Te Ching” and the “Zhuang Zi.”

Skills-

Students will be able to see true “cause and effect” situations.

Classes will learn how to compare the main Chinese philosophies and how to integrate their teachings into the students own lives.

Attitude-

1. Students will learn that even though there is an opposition in all things, there is a flow or “chi” that exists that helps create harmony.
2. Students will learn to appreciate another viewpoint on life that will enrich their understanding of another philosophy.

Procedure

1. Introduce Taoism as a philosophy and the basic principles.
2. Students need to read sections in the textbook provided for this class.
3. We will be discussing the significance of

- yin and yang ideology.
4. We will also review pronouncing pinyin with the correct tone.
 5. We will discuss how Taoism has been integrated into Buddhism.
 6. We will be looking at the “Dao(Way)” which is the origin of creation and “the force that lies behind the changes in the natural world.”
 7. We also will be discussing how Taoism can help them in the daily lives, their body, and mind.
 8. What are some of the differences in your own religion compared to that of Taoism?

Teacher Resource List

Feng, Gia-fu and Jane English, *Tao Te Ching, 25th-Anniversary Edition (Vintage)*..
New York: Random House, Inc., 1997

Henricks, Robert G., *Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching*..
New York: Columbia University Press, 2000

Student Resource List

Feng, Gia-Fu(translation) *Tao Te Ching-Lao Tzu*-primary
source New York: Vintage Books Edition, March 1997

Lopez Jr, Donald S., *Religions of China in Practice*..
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996

Grigg, Ray, *The Tao of Pooh*
Boston: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc. 1994

Assessment

Students will be given a 20 question selected response test on the basic principles found in the Tao Te Ching and Lao Tzu's teachings.

Appendix

Additional activities-

A. Topics of discussion

1. Students will review the basic beliefs taught in Taoism and in groups of 3 or 4 come up with comparisons between their own faiths and that of Taoism.
2. The class in the same groups will make lists of their strengths and weaknesses; thinking of the symbolism of the Yin and Yang symbol.
3. Each group will choose a spokesperson to share their opinions with the class.
4. While in a group the students will come up with situations: What would a Taoist do or not do.

Situations:

Someone in your class is talking bad about another student.
Someone did something bad to you.
You lose an important sporting event.
You want to further your education.
You win the lottery.
You think it is alright to throw your trash on the ground.

B. The Yin and Yang symbol

Have the students draw a Yin and Yang symbol.
Have them write a few sentences on what the symbol means.
Each student will share one of their ideas with the class.
Present the question, "What are other well-known symbols
That mean something to you?"
Each student will be required to write a 2-paged paper on
the symbolism of the Yin and Yang.

Time Allotment

Three class periods

Resources Needed

*Geography: People and Places in a
Changing World* textbook.
A list of recommended reading
will be provided via internet.