

CHINA - Sui Dynasty/Grand Canal

SECTION 8

Standards: Idaho Content Standards, Grade 6-9, World History and Civilization

- Goal 1.7: Trace how natural resources and technological advances have shaped human civilization.
- Goal 1.9: Identify religion's role in the development of civilization.
- Goal 5.1: Build an understanding of multiple perspectives and global interdependence.

Idaho Content Standards, Social Studies Concepts And Vocabulary Grades 6 - 9; World History And Civilization; Geography-Eastern Hemisphere

VOCABULARY TERMS

- natural world
- erosion
- Buddhism
- waterways
- waterforms
- Confucianism

Topic: An analysis of ancient Chinese dynastic analysis and discussion of the benefits and concerns created by massive topographical projects, such as the Grand Canal.

Statement of Purpose: Students will participate in class discussion/lecture followed by an exercise explaining the Chinese canal construction of the Great Canal.

Learning Objectives:

- In accordance with 6-9.WHC.1.7.1, the students will be able to explain how the Sui Dynasty adapted the Grand Canal to develop China's transportation and economic systems.
- In accordance with 6-9.WHC.1.9.3, the students will discuss how Confucianism influenced the social behavior of the Sui Dynasty, and China as a whole.
- In accordance with 6-9.GEH.1.8.5 differences between Buddhism, and Confucianism will briefly be analyzed.

Schedule: (Material and Time)

- **Length of time:** 50 minutes
- **Introduction/Opening Question:** What would you predict would happen to our society and our environment if we carved a man-made river from the Pacific to the Atlantic oceans?
- **Quick review of vocabulary terms:** Review assigned vocabulary terms provided in the last class, including those listed above. The students are to maintain the definitions in a notebook glossary and be prepared for a weekly quiz each Friday.
- **Review Dynastic Cycle Handout:** The handout was apart of the homework assignment, to be filled out from the text reading. It is to be included in the student's class notebook. After briefly reviewing, pass out the more detailed teacher edition for the students' notebook. Remind the students this will be on the next test.
- **Presentation/Discussion:** Show the Sui Dynasty PowerPoint presentation and ask questions to generate discussions. Questions to consider would be:
 - The Sui Dynasty was short lived due to harsh treatment as well as constant outside invasions (Turkic nomads in this case). How does the Dynastic Cycle ideology come into play with the downfall of the Sui dynasty?
[ANSWER: The Dynastic Cycle homework should have taught the students that it included the Mandate of Heaven. The Mandate of Heaven taught that as long as a ruler treated their people well, they were given the right to rule. Once they violated their role as humane authority, they would be overthrown.]
 - Yangdi reinstated the Civil Service Exam process no longer practiced in the prior period of disunity. What was the Civil Service Exam and what curriculum did it follow? How is taking an exam different from other government structures we have already studied, such as Mesopotamia or Egypt? What do we call this political approach?
[ANSWERS: The Civil Service Exam followed Confucius' teachings. This was different since it did not rely on aristocratic influence, lineage or other powers for the government officials to fill their roles. Instead it relied on the political approach known as MERITOCRACY.]
 - Yangdi began major infrastructure improvements to the nation, especially the Grand Canal. In his efforts, countless slave laborers were killed in their work. What does this sound like from a past dynasty we have studied?
[ANSWER: The beginnings of the Great Wall by Shi Huangdi under the Qin dynasty]
 - How did the Grand Canal benefit the nation of China? How did it affect the environment? Has it affected the environment today?

Schedule: (continued)

• ASSIGNED ACTIVITY - THE GRAND CANAL RACE

PURPOSE - to illustrate the difficulty of carving out a canal on a smaller scale, both in engineering and loss of resources.

SUPPLIES

- one department store rectangular box
 - straws
 - kitty litter (the kind that clumps)
1. This will already have been discussed and scheduled. Each student will be part of a team of two (depending on the size of the class). Each team will come with a box (preferably a JC Penney-like rectangular store box; if possible go to the store and get several to provide the students the boxes, or have them get them). Each box will be decorated with symbols and artistic style from the Sui dynasty period. Each team will receive partial credit not only for participating in the activity, but also how authentic their designs are to the period.
 2. Each box will be filled with kitty litter. Make sure there are rolling hills, mountains, and steppes and prairies. However it pours out is the way it is - no shaking!
 3. The task is to carve with straws as a team a "canal" in the kitty litter from the top to the bottom of the box (no shaking or other forming is allowed - just as if the box represents terrain that can't be manipulated easily). Races will be conducted between three teams at a time. The "race" will be timed at 30 seconds per race interval.
 4. After one minute, a small trickle of water will be poured by the teacher from either the top or the bottom where the "canal" begins/ends. If the "canal" does not descend, obviously the water will pool and the water will not flow. This will disqualify the canal.
 5. The team will be awarded points for how quick they complete the task and how easily water flows thru their "canal". Penalty points will also be awarded.

Everyone starts with 100 points

1 pt. off for each second it takes to form the "canal" (the race is set for a 30 seconds, but if a canal is built before the time is up, they will save points)

1 pt. off for each inch of length of the "canal"

10 pts. off for an inch of depth of the "canal" (roughly estimate how deep the entire channel is)

THE PENALTIES REPRESENT THE NUMBER OF SLAVES WHO LOSE THEIR LIVES COMPLETING THE PROJECT - so obviously the less you need to "carve" into the earth, the less laborers' lives are lost in the project.

Schedule: (continued)

- **ASSESSMENT** - Classroom participation, both in class discussion as well as in the activity. A followup time will be allowed following the GRAND CANAL RACE to write a quick INTERACTIVE NOTATION in their notebooks. Have already written on the board (covered) the following questions - they may chose one to respond to:
 - How could the Sui dynasty created the Grand Canal without slave labor?
Be creative and come up with an alternative system, using their available technology and resources.
 - Combining what you know of the Dynastic Cycle, at what stage of the cycle do you believe the Sui dynasty was when the Grand Canal was being built? What was the next step in the cycle?
 - When does a project for national use and glory become too costly?

- **REFERENCES**
 - Chronicle of the Chinese Emperors. London: Thames & Hudson, 1998.
 - The Grand Canal of China. Hong Kong: New China News Ltd. 1984.

 - Modern Marvels: Overseas Highway. History Channel Video.

 - <http://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/painting/4ptgintr.htm>
 - <http://www.chinatour360.com/history/sui-dynasty>
 - <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/prehistory/china/index.html>