

**Lesson Title:** China's Changing Family Structure

**Country:** China

**Class:** World History

**Grade level(s):** 9<sup>th</sup> grade

**Goals and Objectives: The student will be able to:**  
Summarize how family life has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Time required/class periods needed:** Two class periods. 90-minute blocks.

**Primary source bibliography:**

Fox, Travis. Washington Post website with interviews.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/interactives/chinafamilies/>

Lentz, Alison.

<http://alisonlentz.blogspot.com/2010/11/chinas-changing-families.html>

Frontline: China's Vanishing Hutong

[http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/blog/2008/08/china\\_beijings.html](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/blog/2008/08/china_beijings.html)

Williams, Sue. PBS website.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/youngchina/view/>

**Required materials/ supplies:**

Laptop

Speakers

Internet articles

Discussion questions

**Vocabulary:**

Hutong- Ancient city alley and neighborhood in China, typically found in Beijing. One hutong connects to another hutong to form one block, which connects to another block, to form a whole section of a city.

**Procedure:**

1. Listen to Redefining China's Family Analysis and migrant worker portion of website.
2. Have students read, watch and reflect on the information on the four websites.
3. Have students identify key passages and phrases and explain why they are significant in understanding the modern Chinese family.
4. Discussion questions:
  1. For The Washington Post website with interviews Analysis section: How have the higher living standards of today redefined what it means to be a family? Where has the Confucian ideal of the family at the center of one's life gone and what has replaced this traditional value?
  2. For the segment on Migrant workers: Why do so many workers migrate to work in cities rather than choosing to stay in the countryside?
  3. After reading all three of Maureen Fan's articles on The Washington Post website- Redefining China's Families (which can be found on the right hand side of the webpage: One article is on divorce, one is on rising illiteracy rates, and one is on the increasing suicide rate): Summarize and discuss the points in each article and the stated effects on family life.
  4. After reading one Alison Lentz's blogs. In what ways has the family has changed in the last decade and in the last thirty years.
  5. After visiting the PBS website and browsing the nine stories (with especial attention to the story on the rural woman): Discuss the story that had the greatest impact on you.
  6. After reading Leslie Chang's Gilded Age, Gilded Cage about the rising Chinese middle class: What struck you most about Bella's story? Can you relate to her on some level?

**Assessment/evaluation:**

Students can compare this experience with the examples of family life in ancient China in their textbook and other resources that had been studied earlier in the semester.