

**Lesson Title:** The Ming Dynasty

**Class and Grade level(s):** Chinese language and culture, 6 to 12<sup>th</sup> grade

**Goals and Objectives**

**The student will:**

1. Learn about Chinese history through reading and research
2. Compare one period of China's history with the history of other world culture
3. Learn about historical events and people in the Ming dynasty
4. Learn interesting Chinese words and phrases
5. Acquire greater awareness of and interest in Chinese history, culture and language.

**Time required/class periods needed:** 3 to 4 periods of classes (45 to 50minutes each class) and hours of after school work.

**Primary source bibliography:**

1. A poem by Qing general Qi Jiguang in Chinese (<http://poetrynook.com/poem/%E9%A9%AC%E4%B8%8A%E4%BD%9C-4>)

**Other resources used:**

1. KCTA recommended readings (<http://www.smithsonianchannel.com/videos/forbidden-city-the-creation/12202>)
2. The Forbidden City ([http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/china\\_1000ce\\_mingvoyages.htm](http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/china_1000ce_mingvoyages.htm))
3. Voyages of Zheng He

**Required materials/supplies:**

Photos, books, videos,  
Laptop, projector,

**Vocabulary:**

- > Chinese dynasty, Forbidden City, Zhenghe the admiral, treasure boat, and other phrases the students will encounter in the learning process.
- > Different Chinese characters the students will learn during this lesson

### **Procedure**

1. Introduce Ming dynasty to the students by showing students the Smithsonian video and having them read the page from Asia for Educators (above)
2. Have students research the accomplishments and negative aspects of the Ming Dynasty and look at what was happening at the same time in other parts of the world.
3. Ask each student to choose one aspect of the Ming dynasty to research: Suggested topics:
  - a) Yongle emperor moved capital from Nanjing to Beijing, build the Forbidden City, the biggest imperial palace.
  - b) Zhenghe's seven voyages to the west compared with the sea explorations of western nations.
  - c) The reconstruction of the Great Wall compared to the building of the Great Wall in the Qin dynasty.
  - d) Qi Jiguang the great general, who led his family's army to defend China against Japanese invaders from the east and Mongols from the north.
  - e) Other approved topics.
4. Have students prepare a PPT presentation. The slides should include:
  - a) The definition of "dynasty"
  - b) A list the major dynasties in Chinese history in chronological order of years to give a basic idea of the length of Chinese history. Highlight the Ming dynasty.
  - c) The significance of your topic in Chinese and world history and culture
  - d) One Chinese character or phrase learned in the process.
5. In-class discussion questions:
  - a) What is your opinion of the Ming dynasty's decision to cancel all the sea voyages? Was the voyages a waste of time and money or were they worthwhile? If they were worthwhile, in what ways did they benefit China? In what ways did they fail to benefit China?
  - b) What is your opinion of the building of and the reasons behind the building of the Forbidden City?
  - c) Other discussion questions can be gleaned from student presentations.

### **Assessment/evaluation**

Students will be assessed on their PPT presentations, their understanding of the this period in Chinese history, their comparison of the Ming Dynasty's achievements and failures to that of other cultures of the same period and on their participation in class discussions.

A poem by Ming General Qi Jiguang

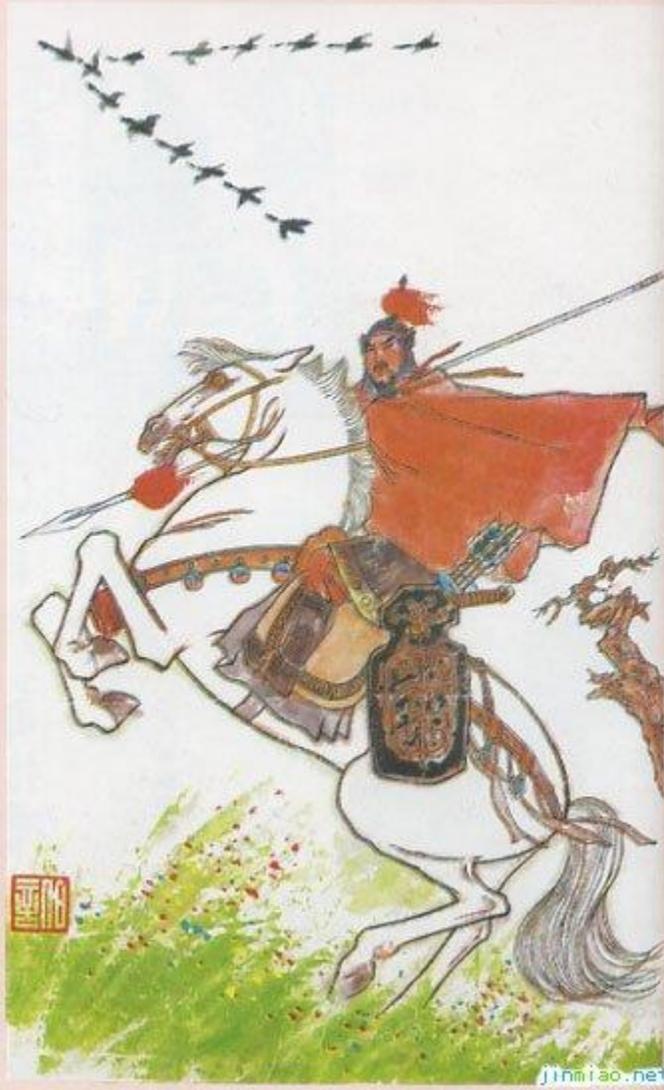
马上作

戚继光

南北驱驰报主情，  
江花边草笑平生。  
一年三百六十日，  
都是横戈马上行。

译文

从南到北不停地驰骋，  
忠心报答君主的信任。  
江岸的花谢了又红，  
边疆的草黄了又青，  
都笑我半生辛劳，  
一年三百六十天，  
跨战马握长枪行进复行进！



English translation for the last two verses of Qi jingguang's poem to describe his life on horse back .

*"For three hundred sixty days a year, I hold my weapon ready atop my steed."*