

**Lesson Title – American Born Chinese****Class and Grade level(s) – World Literature/Sophomores****Goals and Objectives**

The student will:

1. Gain a deeper understanding of the novel's stereotype theme through a variety of instructional strategies including: cooperative groups, individual research and discussion in a Socratic Seminar.
2. Demonstrate their ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate the text through their involvement in the Socratic Seminar.

**Time required/class periods needed**

Four class days over the period of one week.

Day One: Presentation and begin reading.

Day Two: Research one of the three stories.

Day Three: Research another one of the stories.

Day Four: Socratic Seminar – a block day

**Primary source bibliography**American Born Chinese by Gene Yang<http://www.amazon.com/American-Born-Chinese-Genie-Luen/dp/0312384483>Gene Yang Website: <http://geneyang.com/american-born-chinese>

Telling Stories: an interview with Gene Yang

<http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/pwvtv/studyguides/GeneYang.pdf>

Stereotypes (A response from Gene Yang, author of American Born Chinese)

[http://firstsecondbooks.typepad.com/mainblog/2007/05/gene\\_yang\\_on\\_st.html](http://firstsecondbooks.typepad.com/mainblog/2007/05/gene_yang_on_st.html)

The Chinese in California: 1850-1925 --American Memory (One of many articles on this page)

<http://www.loc.gov/search/?in=partof:Teachers&q=chinese%20in%20california>**Other resources used:**

The Story of Monkey King

<http://people.wku.edu/haiwang.yuan/China/tales/monkey.html>

**Required materials/supplies**

Class set of American Born Chinese by Gene Yang

Access to computers

**Vocabulary**

Comics

Graphic Novel

Monkey King

Printz Award

ABC – American Born Chinese

Stereotypes

Transformers

Chink as derogatory term for Chinese

## **Procedure**

### **Introduction:**

American Born Chinese is a graphic novel that focuses on three disparate but creatively-linked stories. The first stars the Monkey King, folk hero of Chinese legend; the second recounts the struggles of a Chinese-American boy trying to fit into a predominantly white suburb; and the third is a sit-com starring everybody's favorite racial stereotype, Cousin Chin Kee.

The focus on a distinctly cultural fable and pervasive American stereotypes drive the story and capture the reader's attention. This first-time novelist won the coveted Printz Award for his unique presentation of Chinese culture and western stereotypes of it.

Graphic novels has emerged as one of the most significant areas of library collection development for school and public libraries alike. Many teachers and librarians are incorporating the graphic novel into the classroom. The brevity of the work is ideal for the classroom and students are extremely motivated to read graphic novels.

### **Day One: ( A block period-90 minutes)**

#### **Cooperative Groupings**

- Select table – Based on a Graphic Novel or Anime
  - Howls' Moving Castle
  - Iron Man
  - 300
  - Catwoman
  - Men in Black

#### **Whole Class - Slide Show Overview**

- Comics to Graphics – a timeline
- Traits of a Graphic Novel
  1. Discuss how one reads pictures, how images are used to create character.
- The Monkey King - story
- ABC's - Jin Wang
- Chin Kee and Danny –cousins

#### **Cooperative Groupings**

- Tables will have a page, with text missing, from the book ABC -the Monkey King, the Chin-Kee or the Danny sequence. As a group they will add dialogue to the pictures.

#### **Whole Class - Doc Camera**

- With Doc Camera show dialogue that groups created, then show the pages from the book.

### Individual

- Begin reading the book.
- Questions to consider while reading: (Refer to graphic organizer.)
  - How are images used to create character?
  - Chin Kee is stereotypical in both appearance and behavior. How does the author achieve this?
  - How does the layout and format of the cartoon art move the story forward?
  - Explain how this style moves the three sub-plots.

### Day Two:

- Review and summarize the story.
- Select one of the three sub-plots and use the given web pages as well as others, to research characters. Character traits will be listed on the graphic organizer.
- Review: Monkey King, Jin or Chin Kee questions.

### Day Three:

- Select a second character to research
- Prepare for Socratic Seminar
  - Write a minimum of five questions using the provided question stems (given below).

### Day Four

Socratic Seminar – Answer the six attached questions, list page numbers from the novel to reference during seminar.

### Assessment

- Participation with cooperative groups – complete the dialogue page.
- Summarize one of the stories—complete the character web.
- Participation in the Socratic Seminar -- create a minimum of five questions
- Socratic Seminar – See attached rubric.

## Socratic Seminar Question Stems

### Agree/Disagree

- Has anyone else had a similar ...?
- Who has a different >>>>?

### Clarification

- I'm not sure I understand...?
- Tell me more about...?
- Do you see gaps in my reasoning?
- Are you taking into account something different from I have considered?

### Support Questions

- Can you give us an example of ...?
- Where in the story ...?
- What would be a good reason for ..?

### Compare/Contrast

- How are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ alike? Different?
- What is that similar to?
- Can you think of why this feels different than...?
- How does this book remind you of ...?

### Point of View

- How might he have felt ...?
- What do you think he was thinking when...?
- Do you have a different interpretation?
- Do you have different conclusions?
- How did you arrive at your viewpoint?

## Socratic Seminar Questions

1. American Born Chinese is the first graphic novel to win the Printz Award and be a finalist for the National Book Award. Why do you think it was picked for these awards? Would you have selected it? Explain.
2. Graphic novels appeal to a variety of people. There are a many graphic novel genres such as fantasy, super-hero, non-fiction. Have you read graphic novels in the past? How did American Born Chinese compare? Graphically speaking what appealed to you? What did not?
3. Did you find the graphic novel format an effective way for Yang to tell his story?
4. What can be learned from the Monkey King and American Born Chinese?
5. Yang uses a television show to tell Chin-Kee's story. Why do you think he does this? Was it effective? Why?
6. The Monkey King chooses to be stuck in the mountain of rocks for 500 years, to escape he must return to his "true form." How do the other characters experience this in American Born Chinese? Have you experienced a similar situation in your life?

### Comments

Comments demonstrate a deep knowledge of the text and the question	Comments demonstrate an understanding of text and/or question	Comments demonstrate general knowledge	Little or no text or question
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### Analysis of Text

Offers solid analysis, without prompting, to move dialogue forward.	Offers analysis without prompting	Offers some analysis, but needs prompting.	Offers little analysis
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### Preparation

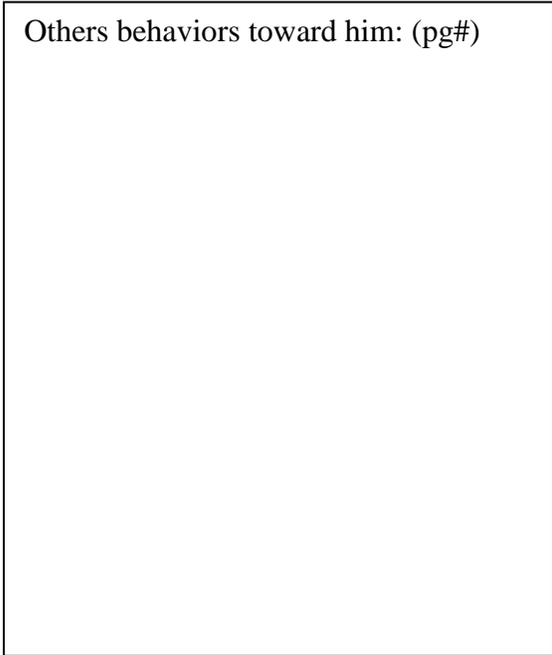
Prepared with notes and a marked/annotated text.	Prepared with notes or an annotated text.	Less prepared, with few notes or no annotated text.	Not prepared.
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### Listening

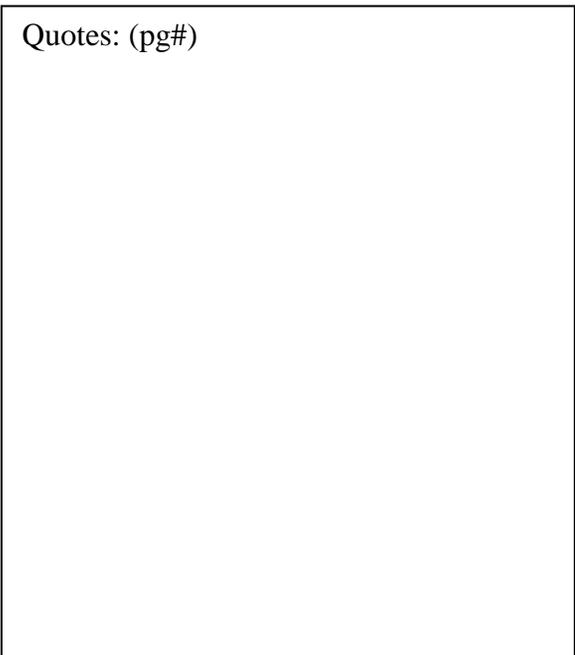
Offers clarification and/or follow-up that extends the conversation.	Shows active listening and seeks clarification.	Actively listening but does not offer clarification to others' comments.	Does not listen, offers no commentary.
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Graphic Organizer (continued on next page)

Others behaviors toward him: (pg#)



Quotes: (pg#)



Physical description (pg#)

Thoughts: (pg#)

Behaviors: (pg#)

Other's statements about him: (pg#)