

**Lesson Title:** Animals of the Chinese Zodiac

**Grade level/ Subject:** Grade 5

**Goals/ Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to know animal signs of the Chinese Zodiac
2. Students will be able to understand the Chinese calendar, the cycles of 12 years, and how each year is represented by a different animal.
3. Students will become familiar with the story that explains how Chinese people choose the 12 animals of the Chinese Zodiac

**Sources:**

The 12 Animals of the Chinese Zodiac 十二生肖, *Drake University*

Annotated Bibliography Plan: Chinese Astrology, *University of Hawai'i*

Video: *Shao Lan's talk:*

[https://www.ted.com/talks/shaolan\\_the\\_chinese\\_zodiac\\_explained](https://www.ted.com/talks/shaolan_the_chinese_zodiac_explained)

Video: Myths behind Chinese Zodiac

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=may2s9j4RLk>

**Duration of lesson:** Three 45 minute lessons

**Materials Needed:** Computer and internet access; poster making materials; any additional lecture material the teacher wishes to incorporate tying this lesson to previous material teaching about China.

**Vocabulary:** Zodiac; Cycle; Character Traits; Sheng Xiao; Chinese New Year; Animal Sign; Shu Xiang.

**Procedure:**

Day 1:

- The teacher begins the class with showing students the history about Chinese Zodiac. URL included: <https://www.thoughtco.com/your-chinese-zodiac-sign-687495>
- A short six minute video of *Shao Lan's Talk:* [https://www.ted.com/talks/shaolan\\_the\\_chinese\\_zodiac\\_explained](https://www.ted.com/talks/shaolan_the_chinese_zodiac_explained) will then be shown.
- Watch a four minute short video Myths behind Chinese Zodiac <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=may2s9j4RLk> about how to find your sign. It is important for students to realize the differences between Western astrology and the

Chinese zodiac, as in Western astrology, it is a constellation determined by when people's birthday falls on the calendar; however, in Chinese zodiac, it is the Shu Xiang.

- The teacher can continue the lecture as needed to tie in what has been shown to the students with previous lessons, textbook materials, or other background information.
- The students will be given the task of learning about an assigned zodiac sign, coming up with several examples of people (friends, relatives or famous people) finding related photos or other materials related to that zodiac sign, and bringing those materials to the next class. If the students have access to computers, tablets, or library resources, they can begin this research at the end of the class period.

Day 2:

- Students will work together with others who researched the same zodiac sign to make a poster about their assigned zodiac animal. Students will be asked to present together about the zodiac animal of their group at the beginning of the next class.

Day 3:

- Classroom presentations and discussion.

**Assessment/ Evaluation:** Students will be assessed based on their group's poster and presentation.

**Poster guidelines:**

1. No more than 1/3 of the poster may be blank.
2. Includes a title.
3. Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
4. Keep font size simple and show clear handwriting.
5. Use different colors to enhance comprehension, try not to decorate the poster, instead make it clear.

**Grading:**

0 points - Did not present the poster.

5 point – Showed some information about the zodiac but need more information.

10 points – Covered most information, but lack of design and presentation

15 points – Addressed most information about the zodiac, presentation was clear and on point.