|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lesson Topic |  Using Chinese Literature to Understand Culture |
| Class/Grade | Ancient World History, 6-8 |
| Activity Type | Creative Response to Writing |
| Lesson Objectives | The student will be able to:1. Describe and summarize aspects of early Chinese culture as evidenced in the story from *The Shiji*.
2. Read, interpret and illustrate classical Chinese poems.

3. Compare Chinese cultural values as evidenced in Chinese literature with personal cultural values.  |
| Essential Questions | How is culture reflected in literature and visual art? |
| Standards/Benchmarks | KSDE Social Studies: 3.4 The student will use their understanding of how societies are shaped by the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups to make a claim or advance a theory using evidence and argument.KSDE Literacy/Common Core: [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/6/4/)[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.9](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/6/9/)[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/6/3/) |
| Sources Used | * *Records of the Grand Historian of China, Vol. II: The Age of Emperor Wu* by Burton Watson, Copyright 1961. Columbia University Press.
* *Maples in the Mist: Children’s Poems from the Tang Dynasty* translated by Minfong Ho. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1996.
* *Anthology of Chinese Literature, Volume II: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present Day*, edited by Cyril Birch (New York Grove Press, 1972), 157-158.
* *World History,* Stanley M. Burstein and Richard Shek: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2006 pp. 184-185
* *Chapter Resource File- China*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 2006 pp. 13-14.
* <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu>
 |
| Required Materials | * Student text book
* Copies of handout: *Poems from the Tang and Song Dynasties*
* Copies of handout: *On Being Happy Though Poor* by Li Yu (Li Liweng)
* Plain white drawing paper and markers/colored pencils
 |
| Time Requirement | 2-3 class periods |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Procedure |  |
| Pre-lesson Preparation | This lesson would be taught during the unit on early Chinese History through the Ming Dynasty, which unit includes a study on Confucius and Confucianism that needs to be taught before this lesson.All three primary sources or a combination of them can be used depending on time and teacher preference. For example, you could do the lesson on poems and give students a choice of the readings to complete.  |
| Lesson introduction | *The Shiji* by Sima Qian Translated by Burton Watson (Handout below)1. Review with students the main teachings and beliefs of Confucianism. Remind students that Confucianism is an ethical system that teaches moral values, respect for authority, importance of duty and treating others as you would want to be treated.
2. Have students read the excerpt from *The Shiji* found in the World History textbookand answer the questions at the end of the reading.
3. Have students write a summary of the story. Have them focus on the qualities of Bu Shi that they found in the reading passage.
4. Have students draw a cartoon or comic strip that illustrates the story of Bu Shi. This should include dialogue and/or captions along with their pictures. Make sure students are able to convey the key events and information relevant to the story.

*Poems of the Tang and Song Dynasties* (Handout below)1. Remind students that the Tang Dynasty is referred to as the Golden Age of China.
2. Read the poems aloud asking students to pay close attention to language, imagery and descriptions. Students may want to close their eyes as the poems are being read to better help them visualize.
3. Have students answer the questions at the end of the poem readings working on their own.
4. Discussion: What imagery especially stood out to them? What descriptive words did the author use that were most effective in helping them visualize the subject of the poems? After discussion, remind students that poets were often artists in China. Tell them to select one of the poems and to draw a picture that illustrates its meaning to them. They can include calligraphy or make their drawing into a scroll.

*On Being Happy Though Poor* by Li Yu (Li Liweng) (Handout below)1. Preview vocabulary in the story. Have students read the story.
2. Have them write a summary of the story. At the end of their summary, have them write what the moral of the story was and what that says about Chinese culture.
3. Discuss with students the “recipe for being happy” as found in the story and ask them to reflect on their own values for what makes them/would make them happy.

4. Have students write their own personal “Recipe for Happiness”. They may choose to write it as a story or as an actual recipe with different ingredients. They should be able to compare their personal cultural values with those represented in the story |
| Wrap-up |  |
| Extension/Assessment | Students will be assessed on their written summaries and comic strips/cartoons from *The Shiji*; their illustration of one of the poems and on their summary and recipe for happiness. Teachers may design a rubric that emphasizes the key components they wish to focus on.  |

 

