

Discovering China

Through Journeys in Film

Educating for Global Understanding www.journeysinfilm.org



THE ACADEMY
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Picture Arts and Sciences



Please Vote for Me

An Interdisciplinary Guide for Teachers



JOURNEYS IN FILM™
educating for global understanding

Journeys in Film wishes to thank Janet Davidson and Shirley MacLaine for recognizing the program's potential and for introducing us to new opportunities.

Cover Photographer:

Travel photographer **Rosanne Pennella** is a Nikon "Legend Behind the Lens." Her work has appeared in The New Yorker, Travel Holiday, PDN, Popular Photography, Asian Photography and PHOTOgraphic. Clients include Nikon, Lowepro, Kodak, The Travel Channel/Discovery Channel and many international tourism offices, travel companies and book publishers including Costa Rica Tourism, the China National Tourist Office, Tourism Malaysia, Geographic Expeditions, Quark Expeditions, Wilderness Travel, Fodor's, Random House and Scholastic Publications. Rosanne also teaches travel photography at the New School in New York, facilitates photo workshops with the American Photo/Popular Photography Mentor Series, leads photo tours and other workshops, and speaks at educational photo events including PMA and Photo Plus Expo. In addition to being named a Nikon Legend, she has received many awards and honors including a PDN Annual and a Puffin Foundation Grant.

Rosanne has generously donated the use of her images for the **Journeys in Film** cover design and curriculum lesson plans. Examples of her work and contact information are available at www.rosannepennella.com

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Prologue

In January of 2002, while attending the Palm Springs International Film Festival, I experienced an epiphany. After spending the week completely immersed in other cultures through film, I felt that I had traveled the world. Each film, itself a complete cultural learning package, presented a character or two who captivated my interest and evoked intense empathy. The films invited Hungarian orphans, tired Afghani workers struggling in Iran, sweet children living in Tehran, spunky Tokyo teenagers, savvy young Tibetan monks living in exile in India, a young boy in China, and a group of coming-of-age French teenagers as welcome guests into my heart. Their stories opened my mind, and I realized how little information or insight most young Americans have about people from other nations. I imagined how students would benefit from seeing these movies, especially while learning the history, geography, and culture of the country from which each film emerges.

Children seldom need to be coaxed into watching films, particularly if the story is good. Young students are visually attuned to cinematic images and enthusiastically respond to stories that expand an awareness of their world and teach them about cultures different from their own. With this in mind, I decided to establish *Journeys in Film* and began to search for dynamic foreign films and the expert educators and specialists who could design a substantial, comprehensive international education curriculum around them.

As a first generation American, I was always aware of the differences and similarities between myself and other kids in my neighborhood. My parents, both Holocaust survivors, brought to the United States their Eastern European traditions and values, and I grew up crossing cultures daily. To understand my parents and their personal stories better, I read voraciously and visualized

the land, the people, and the culture my parents came from. Eventually, films became an important source of my understanding about the vast diversity in our world. It was exciting for me to discover the world beyond my provincial hometown. I could reach out in my imagination and connect to countries so far beyond my own mental and physical boundaries, inspired by people so unlike me.

I believe students will experience this sense of living in another world, however temporarily, when offered the opportunity to study films and cultures of other children living in societies beyond their own neighborhoods. My hope is that the impressions and lessons from the films selected by *Journeys in Film* will continue to echo in their hearts and minds for years to come, inspiring today's students to become cross-culturally competent, productive, and compassionate adults.

I dedicate *Journeys in Film* to my brave parents, Maurice and Julia Strahl. They taught me that education is the greatest tool we have toward understanding and accepting people of all cultures and traditions so that no one should ever be persecuted for being different.

Sincerely,



Joanne Strahl Ashe
Founding Executive Director
Journeys in Film



A Letter From Liam Neeson

The experience of playing Oscar Schindler in Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* deepened my perception not only of the Holocaust, but of the importance of understanding the issues of intolerance and hatred. Being in the public eye has afforded me many opportunities to become involved with various organizations dedicated to teaching tolerance.

Occasionally something comes along that captures my attention and that speaks to my innermost values as a human being. In 2002, I met Joanne Strahl Ashe, who acquainted me with a new educational concept involving film. I was so impressed with the program, *Journeys in Film—An Odyssey in Global Education*, that I eagerly consented to serve as its national spokesperson.

Journeys in Film is a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching cross-cultural understanding and media literacy to middle school students through quality foreign film, using the disciplines of social studies, geography, math, science, language arts, and fine arts.

Journeys chooses films that speak to adolescent students and impart a relevant message. Through the shared experience of film viewing, an increased awareness and appreciation of different cultures can be achieved, and from this new understanding and familiarity, compassion among school-aged children for their peers in other cultures may be born. That, I believe, is a worthy objective.

Through this educational initiative, we are encouraging a new generation of documentary, independent, and world cinema lovers. As most of us can remember, we identified with certain films we saw as children. Film had a definite effect during our formative years. Most teenagers today will have similar experiences. *Journeys* can help make those experiences better and the effects more positive by providing quality films and dedicated educational material.

If we are committed to the dream of world peace, we must first educate our children and teach them understanding and compassion for other people, races, and cultures. I can't help but consider how wonderful it would be if, through our efforts at *Journeys*, we help change attitudes about people who are different from us.

I want to help make teaching through films an institution in our children's education. Please share my vision of a more harmonious world where understanding and dialogue are key to a healthy and peaceful present and future.

Sincerely,



National Spokesperson
Journeys in Film



Introducing *Please Vote for Me*

Since 1949, when Mao Zedong's Red Army consolidated its control over China, the country has been under the control of the dominant Communist Party. For many years, during the Cold War, this huge country of 1.3 billion people was almost entirely closed to the West. After U.S. President Richard Nixon surprised the world by visiting China in 1972 and the United States established full diplomatic relations with China seven years later, American diplomats and businesses have maintained a presence in China, and economic ties between the two countries have continued to expand. A pro-democracy movement grew in the 1980s, culminating in the protests at Tiananmen Square in 1989, protests that were ruthlessly suppressed by the government.

In 2007, director Weijun Chen documented a different approach to democracy, an experiment tried in a third-grade classroom of Evergreen Elementary School in Wuhan, a city roughly the size of London and the largest city in central China. In that school, a student class monitor is charged with seeing that other children in the class are well behaved and on task. After a group of teachers selects three candidates, the class teacher, Mrs. Zhang, allows the three children to run election campaigns to simulate a democratic election. Luo Lei, the incumbent, is confident in his ability to run the classroom and his own election campaign. Cheng Cheng, the leading challenger, wants the post because, he says, he would like to order the other children around. The only female candidate, Xu Xiaofei, is rather shy, but still pleased with her nomination and ready to campaign, even though she is not sure what to expect. The film follows the children in school and at home throughout the campaign until the announcement of the election results.

Since 1979, China has implemented a family-planning policy to control its burgeoning population. Urban married couples are limited to one child per family. The policy has had both intended and unintended results, including a dramatic imbalance between the sexes, but it is supported by the majority of Chinese families. One consequence is obvious in this film: In all three families, the parents are deeply invested in their child's success, leading to strong parental involvement in the campaigns. They teach their children sly campaign tricks, write their speeches, and coach them in their performances, even when the children are reluctant to accept their help.

Please Vote for Me was made as part of the *Why Democracy?* film project. Ten films exploring democracy were made by award-winning filmmakers, and in 2007 the films were broadcast in more than 180 countries. The films explored the nature of democracy:

*Democracy is arguably the greatest political buzzword of our time and is invoked by everyone—but what does it mean? Can it be defined, measured, safeguarded? Can it be sold, bought, and transplanted? Can it grow? Can it die? What does it mean to people who can't even talk about it? What does it mean to people who don't believe in it? **What does it mean to you?***ⁱ

Important questions for your students to consider, indeed. We hope that this curriculum guide will serve as an interdisciplinary resource to help you and your students to learn more about Chinese culture, history, and education, as well as to explore the nature of democracy itself.

ⁱ <http://www.whymdemocracy.net/project/introduction>

Starring: Luo Lei, Cheng Cheng, and Xu Xiaofei

Directed by: Weijun Chen

Produced by: Don Edkins

Running time: 58 minutes

Country: Denmark/China

Language: Mandarin, with English subtitles

Rating: Not rated

Awards: Special Jury Prize, Taiwan International Children's TV & Film Festival; Juried Best Documentary, Ashland Film Festival; Outstanding Individual Achievement, Adolf Grimme Awards, Germany; Adult's Jury Award, Chicago International Children's Film Festival; Best Film (Student Jury), One World International Film Festival; Sterling Feature Award, Silverdocs, Washington, D.C.; International Medium Documentary Award, DOCNZ, New Zealand

To the Teacher...

What is Journeys in Film?

Founded in 2003, Journeys in Film is a nonprofit organization that uses visual storytelling of films as a tool for engaging and inspiring students. At the core of our mission is our middle school program dedicated to advancing global understanding among students through the combination of age-appropriate films from around the world, interdisciplinary classroom materials, and teachers' professional development workshops. Designed to develop 21st-century skills, this comprehensive curriculum model promotes widespread use of film as a window to the world to help students to mitigate existing attitudes of cultural bias, cultivate empathy, develop a richer understanding of global issues, and prepare for effective participation in the world economy—as active global citizens. Our standards-based lesson plans support various learning styles, promote literacy, transport students across the globe, and foster deeper learning that meets core academic objectives.

Selected films act as springboards for developing lesson plans in subjects ranging from math, science, language arts, and social studies to topics that have become critical for students to learn more about—like environmental sustainability, poverty and hunger, global health, diversity, and immigration. Our core team of prominent educators with more than 40 years of experience coordinating, designing, and creating educational materials, consult with filmmakers and cultural specialists in the creation of the curricula, each one dedicated to an in-depth exploration of the culture depicted in a specific film.

The guides merge effectively into teachers' existing lesson plans and mandated curricular requirements. They are not add-ons that require finding new time; instead,

they provide teachers an innovative way to fulfill their school districts' standards-based goals.

Why use this program?

To prepare to participate in tomorrow's global arena, students need to gain a deeper understanding of the world beyond their own borders. *Journeys in Film* offers innovative and engaging tools to explore other cultures, beyond the often negative images seen in print, television, and film media.

For today's media-centric youth, film is an appropriate and effective teaching tool. *Journeys in Film* has carefully selected quality films telling the stories of young people living in locations that may otherwise never be experienced by your students. They travel through these characters and their stories: They drink tea with an Iranian family in *Children of Heaven*, play soccer in a Tibetan monastery in *The Cup*, find themselves in the conflict between urban grandson and rural grandmother in South Korea in *The Way Home*, and watch modern ways challenge Maori traditions in New Zealand in *Whale Rider*.

Through each film in this program, students gain a perspective on daily life of their peers around the world. By identifying with the appealing (and occasionally not so appealing) protagonists, students understand another culture far beyond the limitations of a textbook. These lessons not only bring the world into the classroom, but also allow students to explore the diversity of their own classroom, community, and family.

Who can benefit from this curriculum?

The curriculum was written expressly for students in grades 6 to 9. However, older and younger students may

be intrigued by the films as well, and the curriculum can be adapted for them.

How are the films selected?

Members of Journeys in Film have viewed dozens of films, both privately and at film festivals, in search of quality foreign films with storylines captivating enough to engage middle school students. The films must be rated G or PG. All films must be set within the past 15 years in order to offer a present-day connection for the student, as opposed to period pieces with cultural traditions that may not seem real in today's youth culture.

But I'm supposed to be using the standards in my classroom....

Of course you are—any good teacher is meeting standards. Because this is a curriculum meant for a national audience, we use the McREL standards rather than the standards for any particular state. Since 1990, Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) has been systematically collecting, reviewing, and analyzing state curriculum documents in all subject areas. McREL publishes a report on this work, called *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K–12 Education*, and also has these standards and benchmarks available on their website at <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>. In the standards for each lesson plan, you will be able to recognize the corresponding subject-area standards for your state, even if the language is slightly different. In addition, since the Common Core State Standards Initiative is providing leadership in national standards for mathematics and English language arts for the majority of states, Journeys in Film also lists relevant Common Core standards.

Will my students be able to read the subtitles?

There is an ancient Iranian proverb that says, “He who wants a rose must respect the thorn.” Students are sometimes hesitant to watch a film with subtitles, but once they are hooked by the storyline of the film, reading the subtitles may become automatic and they may not even be conscious of doing so. We have a few suggestions to ease this transition.

Begin by asking the students how many have seen a subtitled film. Explain to them that we watch a subtitled film (as we do any film, for that matter) using not only the words, but also the sounds, the music, the actors' gestures, the locations, and more. The whole film helps to tell the story; dialogue is just one of the many ways the story is told. Suggest that students don't need to worry about following every single word. They should just skim the words for a general meaning and watch the film as a whole.

You can also help your students by using the following tips from teachers in the field:

- Whenever possible, use a large screen format, for better viewing of subtitles. If there is an LCD projector available at your school, by all means use it. In Tulsa, Oklahoma, Circle Cinema, a local art theater, hosted hundreds of students for a showing of the film; you might be able to arrange a similar experience for your students with a local theater
- Auditorium-style seating to simulate the film-going experience is ideal, but not necessary.
- As your school schedule permits, running the film in its entirety is preferable to breaking it into one-period

chunks, unless needs of specific student groups require viewing the film in shorter segments. Offer a break to coincide with recess to stretch and possibly have a refreshment or go outside. See our suggestions below under **Suggestions for Implementation**.

- Bring in one or more older students to read subtitles aloud if your student group requires assistance in reading comprehension. This model also offers an opportunity for mentoring. Be sure to give the older students the opportunity to view the film in advance and become familiar with the subtitles.
- Because the young actors' names may be unfamiliar and difficult to keep straight, write their names on the blackboard where they will be visible throughout the film, with identifying features added: e.g., Luo Lei (small boy), Xu Xiaofei (girl), Cheng Cheng (large boy).
- For TESL students, use subtitles with all films, including the English-language films like *Whale Rider*, to offer the students an opportunity to follow along. Set the mode to English subtitles rather than hearing-impaired, unless there is a student with this disability in the class..
- A DVD is preferable to a VCR for later lessons that call for showing particular scenes. Be sure that if you buy a used DVD over the Internet, it is formatted for North American DVD viewing.

Suggestions for Implementation

As a rule of thumb, we believe that the teacher can best decide what methods of film viewing and lesson implementation are appropriate for each specific class. However, we recommend an interdisciplinary approach

in order to make the greatest impact on the student; this curriculum guide makes this easy to facilitate. (It's much easier for teachers to come on board if they receive a fully articulated, standards-based lesson plan to work with.) This also allows a group of teachers to share their efforts and class time for a truly comprehensive, immersive experience, instead of one or two teachers giving up one or two weeks of class time in this current climate of reaching benchmarks and quotas. *Journeys in Film* encourages you to share this curriculum with your colleagues to create a team approach to engage your entire school community. Your school's gym teacher might be a foreign film aficionado who could devise culturally relevant athletic activities to join the fun.

Consider devoting an entire day or even several days to one film and its curriculum. Cancel all other classes, prepare students by having already implemented the pre-film lesson plan(s), view the film together as one entire student body or in large groups, and design a round-robin rotational method for the remaining lesson plans that are deemed core or essential by your school community. This full-impact, immersive method has resulted in thoughtful dialogue between students, staff, and faculty members.

Consider devoting an entire day or even several days to one film and its respective curriculum. Cancel all classes, prepare students by having already implemented the pre-film lesson plan(s), view the film together as one entire student body or in large groups, and design a round-robin rotational method for the remaining lesson plans that are deemed as "core" or essential by your school community. This full-impact, immersive method has resulted in very thoughtful dialogue among

students, staff and faculty members.

Please note: It is not necessary to follow these lesson plans in order, nor to complete all of them. However, please notice that some lesson plans have been designed for use *before* viewing the film, as a means for engaging the students about the country and culture and offering a context from which to connect with the film. The bulk of the lesson plans have been designed for use after viewing the film.

Here are some of our favorite suggestions from teachers in the field:

- Collaborate with other schools in your district. Bring the skits, role-plays, art projects, and other *Journeys in Film* lessons into elementary classrooms, offering older students the opportunity to act as teachers by presenting a culture they've learned about.
- Start an after-school foreign film club, either as a means of using this program if it doesn't fit into the regular class schedule or as an opportunity for interested students to further explore film from other countries.
- Establish a quarterly film night or ongoing film festival, schedule the viewing in the evening or during the weekend, and invite parents to participate. This model will acquaint parents with the innovative programs being used in your school and encourage dialogue between parents and children. Serve popcorn!
- Designate a hallway or display case for *Journeys in Film*. Enlist the assistance of parents, business leaders,

and community members who may have some connection to the culture represented in the featured film in decorating the space.

- Invite parents, business leaders, and community members from the culture of a given film to visit with students, tell their stories, share traditional foods, etc.
- On a larger scale, your school can plan an annual Global Village Day as the kickoff or finale to the *Journeys in Film* program series.

What else can I use to promote cross-cultural understanding in my classroom?

There is an almost limitless supply of cross-cultural materials available to teachers from organizations and the Internet. Among the best we have found that fits well with the *Journeys in Film* approach is a free resource from the Peace Corps Coverdell World Wise Schools program. The booklet *Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding* is designed for grades 6–12. Its 13 lively, interactive lessons were designed for the classroom from Peace Corps training materials to help American students learn about culture, stereotyping, and the resolution of cross-cultural misunderstanding. If you wish, you can use this as a supplement to, or in place of, the general cross-cultural understanding lessons from *Journeys in Film*. You can download the book or any portion of it at

<http://peacecorps.gov/www/bridges/index.html>.

So welcome to Journeys in Film!

And above all, no matter which specific implementation methods you use as you begin your own *Journeys in Film*, have fun with your students and colleagues while you're doing it!

For information about other *Journeys in Film* products and services (curriculum guides, professional development workshops, and other resources), visit our website: www.journeysinfilm.org.

Additional Suggestions for Assessment

Modern assessment methods have moved beyond the objective test given at the end of a chapter or unit; instead, teachers look for ways to measure students' deeper understanding of ideas. We have included assessment techniques in each lesson in this unit, including the valuable tool for student self-assessment included in several of the lessons. Here are some additional possibilities for you to consider as you plan your unit on this film. Be sure to brief students on what kinds of assessment you will do before you begin the unit.

1. Have students keep a journal throughout the unit. Based on the standards for each lesson, draw up a series of open-ended questions for students to choose from. Depending on the ability of your class, determine and make clear the number of questions that they must answer, when each journal entry must be completed, and the length of each journal entry. Create a rubric on which to judge the journal as a whole and be sure to share the rubric with the students before they begin.
2. Have students put together a class newspaper based on the film. Review the various parts of a newspaper with them (news report, news analysis, editorial, letters to the editor, obituaries, advice columns, sports, fashion, even comics and crosswords). Appoint student editors and then allow students time to brainstorm how to produce a newspaper based on the film. If you have desktop publishing software, students can design the newspaper on a computer, or they can do paste-ups on large sheets of heavy paper.
3. Conduct face-to-face interviews with individual students or pairs of students. This can be done during study halls or lunch, as well as during class time. Make sure students know that the burden of the interview is on them to convey how well they understand the film and the lessons you have used to introduce and follow the film. Help them understand that they should prepare for the interview by reviewing what they have learned. Give them a rubric ahead of time to show how you will judge them on familiarity with the film, learning accomplished during the lessons, poise during the interview, respect for others' opinions (if conducting a joint interview), etc. You can use the standards in this unit as a starting place for your questions. And be sure you don't ask the same questions of each student or group, or the later interviewees will start limiting their preparation.
4. Have students collect a portfolio of work that they have done in this unit. Have them arrange the work from the elements that they think are the best (in front) to those they think are the least effective. Then have them write a response to these or similar questions:
 - Why do you think _____ is your best work?
 - What problems did you have to face as you started this assignment?
 - How did you overcome those problems?
 - Why do you think _____ is your least effective work?
 - What goals do you have for yourself as a learner for the rest of the year?

5. Play a game like *Jeopardy!* Have students come up with their own questions, perhaps splitting the class into two groups. Have each group split into five or six smaller teams and assign them a topic. Have them come up with six *Jeopardy!*-style answers, each with the appropriate question. Then trade the questions and play the game with each large group. You can give a simple reward.



The Land of China

Enduring Understandings:

- China, the most populous country on Earth, covers a vast territory of diverse geographic features.
- China has had little experience with Western-style democracy.

Essential Questions:

- Where is China and which countries are its neighbors?
- What are important geographical features of eastern Asia?

Notes to the Teacher:

Before the lesson, assemble a variety of different types of maps, such as maps showing physical features, rainfall, and population density. Make sure students have access to a good map of China in their textbooks, on the Internet, or on a wall map. There is an excellent and freely reproducible map of China and its neighbors on the CIA Factbook site at

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/cia-maps-publications/map-downloads/China>

[Physiography.pdf](#). Note that China considers Taiwan (Republic of China) to be part of its territory. U.S. government-produced maps and other publications do not recognize this claim and show Taiwan as an independent country.

Population and size statistics used in this lesson come from the 2012 version of this Factbook and can be found at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> if you wish to update them. An excellent source of statistics and background information was the State Department Background Notes, but they have unfortunately been discontinued. The most recent version, updated in 2011, can be found at <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/china/189475.htm>.

China's history spans a long period, with written records dating back about 3,500 years. A series of dynastic emperors ruled the country for millennia, expanding its territory and relying on a huge bureaucracy, infused with Confucian ideals of order, responsibility, and loyalty to the state, to administer its territory. A system of writing was developed, which also helped to hold the huge empire together. Dynasty followed dynasty; the most recent one, the Qing or Manchu dynasty, weakened in

the 19th century and was overthrown in 1911 by Sun Yat-sen, who established a republic. This experiment in government was undercut by a president who wished to declare himself emperor, challenges by various warlords, a growing Communist Party, and the invasion of much of China by the Japanese before and during World War II. After the war, civil war ensued, and eventually the Communist Party triumphed, announcing the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of China, which despite its name, was a dictatorship under the leadership of Mao Zedong (formerly spelled in the West as Mao Tse-tung). It continues as a Communist country today, despite occasional experiments with limited capitalism.

This lesson gives students a context for understanding the film.

Duration of Lesson:

Two periods

Assessment:

Two student-made maps

Map quiz

McREL Geography Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Standard 2. Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment

Level III [Grades 6–8]

1. Knows the location of physical and human features on maps and globes

Standard 5. Understands the concept of regions

Level III [Grades 6–8]

1. Knows regions at various spatial scales (e.g., hemispheres, regions within continents, countries, cities)
2. Understands criteria that give a region identity

Standard 12. Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes

Level III [Grades 6–8]

1. Knows areas of dense human settlement and why they are densely populated (e.g., fertile soil, good transportation, and availability of water in the Ganges River Valley; availability of coal, iron, and other natural resources and river transportation in the Ruhr)



Materials:

Maps of China, atlases, or Internet accessible to students

Copies of **Handouts 1, 2, 3, and 4**. (Two copies of **Handout 1** per student.)

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that they are soon going to see a movie about students who live in China and that to understand the movie better, they should have some knowledge of the country and the region surrounding it. Check students' prior knowledge by asking them to answer the following questions in their notebooks:

- On which continent is China located?
- Name as many countries as you can that border China.
- Where does most of the population of China live?
- What is a body of water that borders China?

2. Most students will probably be stumped by, or unsure about, these questions, with the exception of the first. Tell them that the first activity in this lesson is to make a map of China and some of its neighbors that will help them answer some of these questions. Distribute **Handout 1: A Map of East Asia** and **Handout 2: Mapping Asia: A Checklist**. Put students to work in pairs, but tell them that each student needs to make his or her own map. Be sure students have access to an atlas, a map, or the Internet. Give students time to label the information requested on their maps and circulate to give extra assistance to students who have difficulty with this task.

3. Now ask the same questions again.

Suggested responses:

- China is located on the continent of Asia.
- Countries bordering China are Kazakhstan, Russia, Mongolia, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), India, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. (Note that not all these countries are on the checklist, which is simplified for students. Do not expect them to name all of them, but accept all correct answers.)
- The map doesn't answer this question fully. But since all six of the largest cities in China are in the eastern half of the country, students should hypothesize that most people live there.
- The map gives no answer for the bodies of water because the students were not yet asked to label them.

4. Ask students to define a political map. (A map that shows countries, cities, and other man-made divisions of territory) Ask students what other kinds of maps they have seen or used. (Some suggested responses: physical, temperature, rainfall, population maps; navigational charts) Show them examples of various kinds of maps and discuss their uses.
5. Give students a fresh copy of **Handout 1** to make a physical map and ask them to go to their reference maps to make their own physical map of China. As before, let them work in pairs to find the locations. When they are finished, ask them now to name the bodies of water that border China. (The Yellow Sea, the East China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, and the South China Sea)

6. Ask students to compare the maps and theorize why most of the Chinese people live in the eastern half of the country. (The western half is largely mountain and desert, not conducive to agriculture; cities are generally located along rivers or the seacoast to facilitate trade.)

7. Now write the following number on the board: 1,343,239,923. Ask a student to read the number aloud, making sure that students recognize it is over a billion. Explain that this was the population of China according to U.S. government estimates in 2012. Ask for volunteers to do some research and calculations for homework to determine:

- a. How big is the population of China compared with the population of the United States?
(Approximately 4.28 times the size of the U.S. population of 313,847,465 as estimated by the U.S. government in July 2012)
- b. What percentage of the world's population lives in China? $([1,343,239,923 \text{ population of China} \div 7,021,836,029 \text{ total world population}] \times 100 = \text{approximately } 19\%)$
- c. How big is China's area compared with the area of the United States? (China has 9,596,961 sq. km. v. 9,826,675 sq. km. for the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. They are roughly the same size geographically.)

8. Test students' understanding of their maps by giving the map quiz on **Handout 4**.

Suggested answers:

1. Sea of Japan
2. Hong Kong
3. Central to southern Mongolia and northern China
4. South Korea
5. Taiwan
6. Either Nepal or Bhutan
7. Plateau of Tibet
8. Mount Everest—in northeastern Nepal, Himalayan Mountains
9. Beijing
10. East China Sea
11. Tien Shan
12. Himalaya
13. Tokyo
14. Yellow Sea

9. Remind students of the lesson's main points, that China is a large and populous country with highly varied topography. Explain that China's people speak many different languages and dialects, as well. Ask students what kind of government they think could best govern such a large and diverse country.

10. Using information in the Notes from the Teacher section, briefly summarize China's transition from empire to republic to Communism. Point out that the period as a republic was short and marked by both civil war and outside invasion. Therefore the Chinese people have relatively little familiarity with the principles of Western-style democracy. Explain that the movie students will see is about what happens when a school in China attempts an experiment in democracy.

Handout 1 Map of East Asia

Directions: Label the places listed on **Handout 2** on the map below to make your own political map.



**Handout 2 Mapping Asia I: A Checklist****Countries**

Bangladesh

Bhutan

China

India

Kyrgyzstan

Japan

Laos

Mongolia

Myanmar (Burma)

Nepal

North Korea

Russia

South Korea

Taiwan

Thailand

Vietnam

Major Cities in China

Beijing

Shanghai

Chongqing

Tianjin

Wuhan

Harbin

Hong Kong

Other Major Cities in Asia

Seoul

Taipei

Pyongyang

Hanoi

Bangkok

Tokyo



Handout 3 Mapping Asia II: A Checklist

Directions: Using a printed map or atlas or maps on the Internet, locate each of the following and label them in the correct location to make your own physical map of Asia on Handout 1. Check off each one as you label it on the map.

Bodies of Water

South China Sea

Sea of Japan

East China Sea

Yellow Sea

Taiwan Strait

Pacific Ocean

Yangtze (Chang) River
Xi Jiang
River

Huang He (Yellow) River

Grand Canal, China

Landforms

Tien Shan Mountains

Plateau of Tibet

Himalayas

Altai Mountains

Gobi Desert

North China Plain

Mount Everest

Plateau of Tibet

Great Wall of China



Handout 4 Map Quiz

Name _____ Date _____

China and East Asia: Political and Physical Features

1. What is the body of water that separates the west coast of Japan from China and the Korean Peninsula?_____
2. What city is located on an island in the bay at the southern end of the Xi Jiang River?_____
3. Describe the location of the Gobi Desert._____

4. Seoul is the capital of what country?_____
5. Taipei is located on what island?_____
6. Name one country that lies on the border between India and China._____
7. Name the plateau that lies just north of Nepal._____
8. Locate Mount Everest, which has the highest elevation above sea level on Earth.

9. Which city is the capital of China?_____
10. Taiwan is in the southern end of what body of water?_____
11. What mountain range is in northwestern China?_____
12. Name the mountain range in Nepal._____
13. Name the capital city of Japan._____
14. Name the sea between China and the Korean Peninsula._____

A Lesson in Democracy

Enduring Understandings:

- Certain fundamental values, such as justice and equality, are essential for a well-functioning democracy.
- Fair elections are a critically important component of effective democracy.

Essential Questions:

- What are the key values necessary in a democracy?
- What happens when elections are not well run?

Notes to the Teacher:

To prepare for this lesson, photocopy **Handout 1: Principles of Democracy** and cut it apart into sections. The sections are not exhaustive; they reflect only the following democratic values:

- Justice (All people should be equal before the law, which should be upheld with honor and integrity.)
- Diversity (The nation embraces the variety of its citizens regardless of race, religion, age, sex, culture, or economic status.)
- Truth (Government will be transparent and will not lie to the people.)
- Patriotism (Citizens love their country and the values it stands for.)
- Equality (People have the same legal and political rights, regardless of race, religion, age, sex, culture, or economic status.)
- Popular Sovereignty (The government is created by the people, draws its power from them, and is subject to their will.)
- Common Good (Government works to ensure the welfare of all the people, not just of particular groups.)
- Individual Rights (Each person has rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.)

The last section of the handout has no value listed; use this to insert one or more of your own that you feel is important. (Note that these values or principles are ref-

erenced again in Lesson 6 of this curriculum, an art project based on symbols for these values.)

Next, prepare a bulletin board area which is headed “Principles of Democracy.” Leave space for students to put up their answers to Handout 1. If you wish, you may also give each of the groups paper and drawing implements and ask them to illustrate one or more of the principles of democracy in action; these drawings can also go up on the bulletin board.

The lesson begins with a discussion of some of the basic principles of Western-style democracy. Then students watch the film, preferably all in one sitting. A response sheet encourages individual students to react to the film and then students share their responses. A classroom discussion covers more general questions about the purpose and effect of the documentary.

Finally, there is an optional activity if you have time, a classroom election, which gives students the opportunity to run an election of their own. Please modify and edit the procedural steps as you see fit for your classroom; they are only suggestions to get you started and could be expanded or edited to become as large and complex as you like or as small and simple as you need.

Duration of Lesson:

Two class periods, plus time for film viewing and “election campaign” (optional)

Assessment:

Class discussion

Likes/Dislikes evaluation

McREL Social Studies Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Standard 1. Understands ideas about civic life, politics, and government

Level III (Grades 6–8)

2. Understands how politics enables people with differing ideas to reach binding agreements (e.g., presenting information and evidence, stating arguments, negotiating, compromising, voting)

Standard 9. Understands the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy

Level III (Grades 6–8)

1. Identifies fundamental values and principles that are expressed in basic documents (e.g., Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution), significant political speeches and writings (e.g., The Federalist, King’s “I Have a Dream” speech), and individual and group actions that embody fundamental values and principles (e.g., suffrage and civil rights movements)
2. Understands how certain values (e.g., individual rights, the common good, self government, justice, equality, diversity, openness and free inquiry, truth, patriotism) are fundamental to American public life
3. Understands popular sovereignty as opposed to state sovereignty (e.g., ultimate political authority rests with the people who create and can alter or abolish governments; citizens are not the same as subjects), and knows that popular sovereignty is a fundamental principle of American constitutional democracy

Common Core Standards

Addressed by this lesson:

RH.6–8.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6–8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

Materials:

Film, *Please Vote for Me*, or excerpt

One copy of **Handout 1**, cut into sections

Copy of **Handout 2** for each student

Copy of Handout 4

Optional: **Handout 3**

Procedure:

1. When students are seated, show the first minute and a half of the film *Please Vote for Me*, up to the scene of the class picture. Explain that this is the morning routine for a school in China. Ask students to compare this scene with a typical morning routine at your school (or an assembly program, if more appropriate). Ask students if they would prefer to start the morning as the Chinese students do. (Most students would dislike the regimentation, but some might appreciate the sense of commitment and community.) Explain to students that they are about to watch a film in which some of these students have an experiment in democracy, but that it’s important first to clarify their own ideas about what democracy means.
2. Tell students that scholars have identified important principles or values that underlie an effective democracy. Organize students into groups and give each group several prepared sections of **Handout 1: Principles of Democracy** to consider. Ask them to talk about whether democracy really needs each of these principles and what would happen if the principle were ignored. Then have them explain their ideas

to the class. Have them place the cards for the principles they agree with on the bulletin board.

3. Tell the class that they are now going to watch the rest of the film to see what happens when the children in China experience their first taste of democracy. Restart the film and allow the class to watch it without interruption, if possible.

4. As soon as possible after showing the film, distribute **Handout 2: Please Vote for Me Response Sheet**.

Give students about 10 minutes to fill out the sheets; ask them to work thoughtfully and make their comments as full as possible. Then have a general class discussion centering on the four questions on the handout.

5. Guide a discussion in which your students consider these questions:
 - How democratic was the class election? Which of the democratic principles previously discussed were evident in this election? Which were ignored?
 - If you were the third-grade teacher, what would you have done differently?
 - How involved were the parents of the candidates in the election? Should they have acted differently? How much should parents involve themselves in their student's life at school?
 - What do you think the Chinese students learned from their experiment in democracy?
 - What are the similarities and differences between this classroom election and our own electoral

process, particularly presidential campaigns?

- How does your school handle elections? What safeguards are in place? What would you do differently?
 - What do you think was the filmmaker's purpose in making this documentary? Was he objective in his approach and methods?
 - Do you think the Chinese school will continue its "experiment in democracy"? Was it successful? Why, or why not?
6. If you wish to do the optional class election (below), have students complete **Handout 3: What's in a Name?** for homework. (Acknowledge to the class that not all students may be able to answer all of the questions.)

Optional Activity: Classroom election (for use after viewing the film)

1. Divide the students into two or three groups. (More than three can make the vote too divided for a majority result.) Explain to students that they are going to have a classroom election of their own. Brainstorm and define ideas about elections, voting, representative leaders, and themes that you wish to concentrate on during the election process. Make sure to define with the class for what position the students will be campaigning and voting (e.g., class monitor, class president, cheerleader, etc.).
2. Explain to students that their group or party will be allowed to choose only one candidate for the class

election. Each party must determine the process they will use to choose their individual candidate; the process must be approved by the teacher. Distribute **Handout 4: Student Model Election—Party Campaign Worksheet**. Tell students that the candidate will be chosen and presented for election based on who the party thinks has the “best” meaning of their name from **Handout 3**, i.e., the name and its meaning that will be likely to attract the most votes. Allow students time to choose their candidate.

3. Explain that each party will also need to create a platform to have their candidate follow, present to the voters, and promise to enact if elected. Platforms must include only two campaign promises: one positive treat or reward, such as a promise of candy after a class one day or doughnuts for dessert after lunch. The second promise must be a reform for the class, like an extra homework assignment, an extra quiz, the loss of a current privilege, or an extra duty one day. Platforms must also be approved by the teacher.
4. Once candidates and platforms are decided, explain to students the details of campaigning (the rules that will work for your school and class): where and how long a campaign runs, where candidates can ask for votes, where posters or ads can be placed, whether

you will allow campaign songs, etc.

5. Set an election day and time. Determine with the class how the winner will be chosen: a majority vote or a certain number of votes needed for a victory. Create ballots for the voting. (You may need extra run-off ballots to find a clear winner or narrow the field to just two candidates.)
6. On election day, remind students that their vote is a private and individual right that should not be abused. Collect ballots, tally, and announce results. You may wish only to announce the winner, not the actual tallies, to save hurt feelings.
7. Once a clear winner is determined, set dates for the campaign promises to be put in effect.
8. Follow up with discussion and response questions on student **Handout 4** once the project has ended or as you see fit during the process.

Handout 1 — p. 1 Principles of Democracy

Democratic Value: **Justice**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value: **Diversity**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value: **Truth**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Handout 1 — p. 2 Principles of Democracy

Democratic Value: **Patriotism**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value: **Equality**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value: **Popular Sovereignty**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Handout 1 – p. 3 **Principles of Democracy**

Democratic Value: **Common Good**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value: **Individual Rights**

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Democratic Value:

What does it mean in your own words?

What would our country be like without it?

Handout 2 *Please Vote for Me* Response Sheet

<p>Likes — What appealed to you in this film?</p>	<p>Dislikes — What didn't you enjoy in this film?</p>
<p>Puzzles — What questions do you have after seeing this film?</p>	<p>Patterns — What elements (images or actions) keep reappearing in the film?</p>

Handout 3

What's in a Name?

Throughout Chinese history people have had strongly held beliefs and practices, based on the ideas of a Chinese philosopher named Confucius (551–479 BCE). Confucius held that there are five relationships that demand respect and duty:

- between a ruler and subject
- between father and son
- between elder brother and younger brother
- between husband and wife
- between friends.

The ideas of ancestor worship, filial piety, and responsibilities are tied in with Confucius and with two other sets of beliefs held in China, Buddhism and Daoism. For the Chinese, it was important to know your family history and honor your family name with good deeds and proper behavior. It was important never to bring shame upon your name by being a bad person.

Directions: Find out as best you can why you are named what you are named. Why were certain names given to you? What do they mean? What country or region of the world are they from? Are you named after a particular person? What responsibilities or jobs were associated with your name? Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

My Name: (Print neatly)

Full Name_____

Meaning of first name:_____

Origin of first name:_____

Meaning of middle name_____

Origin of middle name_____

Meaning of last name_____

Origin of last name_____

Notes about my name:

How do I plan to honor and live up to my family name?

Handout 4 – p. 1 Student Model Election Party Campaign Worksheet

Your Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Name of your group's political party: _____

Teacher approval of the process for selection of candidate: _____

Real Name of your candidate: _____

Meaning of candidate's name: _____

Party Platform Promises:

Positive Promise: _____

Reform Promise: _____

Teacher (initials here) Approved Platform promises: _____

Campaign Dates: _____

Election Date: _____

Winner: _____ Vote Totals: _____

Answer the following questions:

1. What are the benefits of voting for your representative leaders?

Handout 4 — p. 2

2. Explain how the party system, campaign process, and elections can be a good thing.

3. Explain how the party system, campaign promises, and election results can have a negative effect.

4. Explain how and why you are satisfied or unsatisfied with the results of the class election.

5. How would you change this system to make it work better?

Chinese Characters

Enduring Understandings:

- The concepts of precision and practice are essential to understanding childhood in China.
- Children in China experience an educational style different from that of children in the United States.
- Beauty and art worldwide are just as essential to learning as are facts and figures

Essential Questions:

- How do children in China learn to write?
- What are the important traits of Chinese characters?
- How is China attempting to blend the modern world with their ancient traditions? Why could this be a difficult cultural blend?

Notes to the Teacher:

Part 1 of this lesson introduces students to the Chinese writing system of using characters rather than letters of an alphabet. Each character represents a syllable in a word, not simply a letter. You may wish to write the English alphabet at the top of the board for the duration of this lesson, if you do not have it displayed already. It would also be helpful to have available pictures of Egyptian hieroglyphs, Sumerian cuneiform, Native American pictograms, and Chinese characters.

Part 2 will introduce the students to some common Chinese characters and allow them the opportunity to practice writing them on their own. By beginning with greetings and simple phrases, the students should begin to hear the differences between English and Chinese tonalities. Before the lesson begins, write the Chinese characters for “*Nǐ hǎo*,” “*zǎo ān*,” and “*xínghuì*” on the board and cover them with a sheet of paper. (See **Handout 1.**) In this part of the lesson, students study Chinese characters and try to copy them. Allow students to work at their own pace; some will complete more characters than others. Assist students who have difficulty with this activity by running off enlarged copies of the characters for them to trace.

The last part of this activity gives students the opportunity to make a greeting card. You may wish to team up with or consult an art teacher to show students examples of traditional Chinese designs.

If you have students in your class of Chinese descent, be sensitive to their feelings about this unit. Do not expect them to be experts on China, but give them the

opportunity to share information about the country and its culture if they wish. Having a guest speaker who is knowledgeable about China to answer questions would be an excellent supplement to this lesson.

An additional resource if you choose to develop this lesson further is the chapter “Running” from Peter Hessler’s book *River Town*. It is available at the Peace Corps World Wise Schools website at

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/stories/stories.cfm?psid=168##> and is accompanied by additional lesson plans. The story includes additional Chinese characters and it details Hessler’s struggles to learn the language as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Chinese city of Fuling. The Peace Corps also has an excellent introduction to the language at http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/multimedia/language/transcripts/CN_Mandarin_Language_Lessons.pdf.

Students wishing to know other words in Chinese can enter a word in English to learn the Chinese word, characters, and pronunciation at this website:

<http://www.mdbg.net/chindict/chindict.php?page=worddict&wdrst=o&wdqb=nihao>.

Duration of Lesson:

Two class periods

Assessment:

Student participation in discussion and understanding of parts of language

Student practice of common Chinese characters

Student-made greeting card

McREL Language Arts Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Standard 1. Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

Level III [Grades: 6–8]

5. Uses content, style, and structure (e.g., formal or informal language, genre, organization) appropriate for specific audiences (e.g., public, private) and purposes (e.g., to entertain, to influence, to inform)

Foreign Language

Standard 5. Understands that different languages use different patterns to communicate and applies this knowledge to the target and native languages

Level III [Grades: 5–8]

3. Understands that languages have critical sound distinctions that convey meaning)

Geography Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Standard 10. Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics

Level III [Grades: 6–8]

2. Knows ways in which communities reflect the cultural background of their inhabitants (e.g., distinctive building styles, billboards in Spanish, foreign-language advertisements in newspapers)

Materials:

Blank paper, construction paper or large roll of paper

Pencils

Colored pencils, pens, or markers

Photocopies for each student:

Handout 1: Common Chinese Characters

Handout 2: Character Practice Sheet

Procedure:

Part 1:

1. Show students the first three minutes of the film *Please Vote for Me* and ask them to pay particular attention to what the teacher writes on the board. Stop the film for them to look more closely when writing appears. Ask them to describe the teacher's writing. Explain that the Chinese language is very different from English in both the written and spoken forms.
2. Begin by writing the words "letter" and "syllable" on the board. Remind students that they have been using syllables since they learned to talk and letters since they learned to read and write their names. Then ask the students to define each of these words in their notebooks. Have a few students write their definitions on the board. (Possible answers: Letter—a symbol used to create written words; syllable—part of a word

usually made of multiple letters, helpful when learning pronunciation.) If necessary, clarify by writing a few student names on the board and dividing them into syllables.

3. Once you are satisfied with the definitions, ask the students to think about how we might express ourselves in writing if we did not have letters.
4. On the piece of paper where they wrote their definitions, ask your students to write a note to one of their friends without using any letters. They can use pictures, symbols, or even create their own code, but tell them they will have 10 minutes to write their message.
5. At the end of the 10 minutes, ask them to exchange messages with a partner. Give them a few minutes to attempt to figure out the message. When time is up, allow the partners to get together to see if their interpretations were accurate.
6. Ask the class a number of follow-up questions:
 - Did they find it difficult to decipher the messages?
 - Did they like trying a different way of expressing their thoughts?
 - Can they think of any examples of societies that do not use letters in writing? (Suggested answers: Egyptian hieroglyphics; Sumerian cuneiform; Native American pictograms; Chinese characters.)
7. Show the same film clip again to remind students of how Chinese sounds and how the characters look. As they watch the clips, ask them just to think about the way the students speak and write and to make a list of

what they notice. Then ask what they noticed about the writing. What did they notice about the way the words sound?

8. Explain that the Chinese do not have a letter-based alphabet. They use a syllabic-based character system. Each Chinese character represents a syllable in a word, not a letter in a word. It is the combination of syllables and their pronunciation that is the basis of the Chinese language.

Part 2: Introduction—Greetings

1. Individually greet students at the classroom door with any of the following greetings: “Hello,” “Good morning,” “*Buenos días*,” “*Bonjour*,” “*Aloha*,” etc. Be careful not to include “*Nǐ hǎo*,” yet.
2. When students are seated and quiet, ask them to tell you any greetings in other languages they might know. Write their responses on one side of the board. On the other side of the board, you should have already written and covered with a piece of paper the Chinese characters for “Hello,” “Good morning,” and “Good afternoon.” (See **Handout 1**.)
3. As the students brainstorm various greetings, ask them to think about the beginning of the film *Please Vote for Me* and how the teacher greeted her students. Does anyone remember what she said? If not, you should remind them by saying “*Ni hao*” and writing the pronunciation on the board with the other greetings. Then ask the students how people in China express themselves in writing. Some possible questions for discussion:

- Do the Chinese use letters and numbers the way we do?
 - What do you think the benefits of using characters and not letters might be?
 - What do you think: Is our alphabet or the character writing system older?
4. Uncover the characters that correspond with “*Nǐ* *hǎo*,” “*zǎo ān*,” and “*xínghuì*.” Write the pinyin transliteration next to each character and then the English equivalent. Teach the students how to pronounce the words. (See Notes to the teacher, above, for the pronunciation website.)
 5. Distribute **Handout 2**. Ask the students to practice writing the characters by copying them into the grids provided using a pencil. Tell them to write one character in each grid. They should also write the pinyin for each character in the lines provided, along with the English translation. Remind them that this is just practice and they will have another opportunity to perfect these characters
 6. Ask students to reflect on how writing in English is different from writing in Chinese. Was it more difficult or confusing, was it fun, etc.? Did it feel more like writing or drawing?
 7. Ask the students to incorporate one or more of the phrases on **Handout 1** into a greeting card for one of their friends, parents, or teachers. Encourage them to be creative and to use the Chinese characters they practiced earlier. Tell the students to be careful with their character writing since they will be exchanging these cards with a classmate to translate.
 8. If desired, work with an art teacher or show students pictures of traditional Chinese art to inspire them with ideas for their cards. Give students time in class to make their cards or allow them to complete them for homework. Then have partners exchange cards to see if the partner can identify and translate the characters used.

Handout 1 Common Chinese Phrases

Directions: Study the following Chinese characters and their translations.

你好! The first line is the Chinese character.

Nǐ hǎo! The second line is pinyin, which translates the character to the Latin alphabet.

Hello! The third line is the English translation.

你好!
Nǐ hǎo!

你好吗?
Nǐ hǎo ma?
How are you?

歡迎!
Huān ying!
Welcome!

早安
Zǎo'ān
Good morning.

幸会
Xìnghuì!
Nice to meet you!

拜拜
Báibái
Bye, Bye!

我很激动.
Wǒ hěn dào jī dòng.
I'm very excited.

我相信你.
Wǒ xiāng xìn nǐ.
I trust (believe in) you.

我很高兴有你这样的朋友.
Wǒ hěn gāo xìng yǒu nǐ zhè yàng de péng you.
I'm so glad to have a friend like you. (I'm happy to have you.)

Handout 2 Character Practice Sheet

Directions: Practice drawing the Chinese characters for three phrases from Handout 1.

Pinyin term: _____

English Translation: _____

Pinyin term: _____

English Translation: _____

Pinyin term: _____

English Translation: _____

Chinese Number Rods: Integer Calculations

Enduring Understandings:

- Over 2000 years ago the Chinese developed a place value system based on 10. They used numerals called rod numbers, which were formed with small bamboo sticks.
- Adding integers requires knowledge of integer rules.

Essential Question:

- How are number rods used to perform arithmetic operations?

Duration of Lesson:

One to two class periods

Assessment:

Handout 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to write numbers using the Chinese rod numerals.

Students will determine the rules of integer addition using Chinese rod numerals.

Handout 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to correctly add integers using the Chinese rod numerals, if desired.

Notes to the Teacher:

For many students, one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome to be successful in pre-algebra or algebra is the understanding of integer rules—the rules that govern how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide positive and negative numbers. The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand how to add integers using Chinese rod numerals as a manipulative. The goal of activities in Part 1 is to help students understand how the Chinese number rod system works and to write some numbers using the number rod system. The activities in Part 2 will allow students to determine integer addition rules by completing an investigation using Chinese rod numerals. Some simple integer addition problems will be used as reinforcement.

The Chinese number rod system is based on the same mathematical concepts as the abacus, the use of which is documented in China as early as the 2nd century BCE and which probably goes back much further. The abacus is a frame with beads strung on it, above and below a crossbar. Each of the two beads on a string above the bar represents 5; the five beads on each string below the bar each represent 1. Each string represents a place—ones, tens, hundreds, thousands, etc. Try to find an abacus to show the class at the beginning of the lesson.

McREL Mathematics Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Standard 2. Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of the concepts of numbers

Level III [Grades: 6–8]

3. Understands the role of positive and negative integers in the number system.

1. Understands the concept of positive integers
2. Understands the concept of negative integers

Standard 3. Uses basic and advanced procedures while performing the processes of computation

Level III [Grades: 6–8]

1. Adds, subtracts, multiplies, and divides integers and rational numbers

5. Adds integers
9. Understands the concept of integer addition

Standard 9. Understands the general nature and uses of mathematics

Level III [Grades: 6–8]

1. Understands that mathematics has been helpful in practical ways for many centuries

Common Core Standards for Mathematics

Addressed by this lesson:

The Number System 6.NS

Apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, and divide rational numbers.

5. Understand that positive and negative numbers are used together to describe quantities having opposite directions or values (e.g., temperature above/below zero, elevation above/below sea level, credits/debits, positive/negative electric charge); use positive and negative numbers to represent quantities in real-world contexts, explaining the meaning of 0 in each situation.

The Number System 7.NS

Apply and extend previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, and divide rational numbers.

1. Apply and extend previous understandings of addition and subtraction to add and subtract rational numbers; represent addition and subtraction on a horizontal or vertical number line diagram.
 - a. Describe situations in which opposite quantities combine to make 0. *For example, a hydrogen atom has 0 charge because its two constituents are oppositely charged.*
 - b. Understand $p + q$ as the number located a distance $|q|$ from p , in the positive or negative direction depending on whether q is positive or negative. Show that a number and its opposite have a sum of 0 (are additive inverses). Interpret sums of rational numbers by describing real-world contexts.
 - c. Understand subtraction of rational numbers as adding the additive inverse, $p - q = p + (-q)$. Show that the distance between two rational numbers on the number line is the absolute value of their difference, and apply this principle in real-world contexts.
 - d. Apply properties of operations as strategies to add and subtract rational numbers.

Materials:

Pencils

Colored pencils, pens, or markers

Toothpicks of two different colors,
preferably red and black

Procedure

Part 1:

1. Ask students what they know about Chinese mathematics. Students may mention the abacus; if not, explain to them what an abacus is, and if you have one, demonstrate how it works. If not, use a picture from the Internet.
2. Begin a discussion about a Chinese number system based on 10 using bamboo sticks to represent numbers (Chinese rod numeral system).
3. Distribute copies of **Handout 1**. Read through the description with students. Look at the examples. Discuss their observations of the system. Lead them to realize the following:
 - a. Vertical numbers were used for ones, horizontal for tens, vertical for hundreds, horizontal for thousands, and so on.
 - b. A circle was used as a zero placeholder.
 - c. Numerals 1–5 are represented by single tally marks according to the number counted—e.g., one tally mark for one, two tally marks for two, etc..
 - d. Numerals 6–9 use one mark to represent 5 and

then simple tally strokes added accordingly. Relate this to hand counting.

- e. Powers of 10 would be a single stroke with the zero placeholders to the right.
 - f. Ordering and position of numbers are the same as the modern number system
4. Have students answer the questions at the bottom of the handout.

Answers to Handout 1:

42 ≡≡||

235 ||≡||||

1,475 —|||| ≡||||

12,481 |≡|||| ≡|||

5. Review the answers on the handout and give additional examples for your students until you feel they have grasped the concept of writing numbers with the rods.

Part 2:

1. Review with students the concept of absolute value.
2. Divide students into pairs. Distribute **Handout 2** and red and black (or any other two colors) toothpicks to each pair of students. Using a projector if possible or colored chalk on the blackboard, model the example problems for the students while they do the work at their desks.
3. Have the students continue solving the integer problems with their partners. They should answer the investigation questions that follow as well.
4. Conclude the lesson with a large group discussion on the investigation questions. Follow-up work could include additional integer addition problems.

Handout 1 Introducing Chinese Number Rods

Vertical

Horizontal

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Over 2000 years ago, the Chinese created a number system called Chinese rod numerals, using bamboo rods to represent numbers. Study the examples below to determine the rules for creating numbers using this system.

$$\begin{array}{|l} \text{III} \\ \hline \end{array} \bigcirc = 80$$

$$\begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} = 2647$$

$$\begin{array}{|l} \text{T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} = 655$$

$$\begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} \begin{array}{|l} \text{= T} \\ \hline \end{array} = 73$$

Write three observations about the Chinese rod numeral system:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Now use your toothpicks to represent the following numbers. Then write the number using the rod numeral system.

42 _____ 235 _____

1475 _____ 12,481 _____

Handout 2 – p. 1 Using Rod Numerals for Integers

An amazing fact about Chinese math is that Chinese arithmetic was the first to allow negative numbers. The rod numerals came in two colors to represent positive and negative numbers. Red rods were used to represent positive numbers and black rods were used to represent negative numbers. The basic premise is that the equal numbers of black and red rods attract, make a pair, and then wipe each other out, leaving behind any remaining rods.

Study the following examples with different colored toothpicks.

Example: Cheng Cheng was promised three votes by different classmates. Later, those same classmates said they were taking back the votes (negative) and giving them to Luo Lei instead. How many net votes does Cheng Cheng have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = 0 \qquad 3 + (-3) = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Example: Xu Xiaofei is promised six votes from her classmates. She gains two more votes after her performance. How many net votes does Xu Xiaofei have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad 6 + 2 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Example: Xu Xiaofei then loses one of her votes to Cheng Cheng. How many net votes does Xu Xiaofei have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad 8 + (-1) = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Example: Luo Lei has no money in his piggy bank. He has already borrowed 2 yen from his friends at school. He hopes to influence some voters with candy that he will buy at the store, so he borrows 3 more yen from his parents. What is Luo Lei's net balance?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad (-2) + (-3) = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Handout 2 – p. 2 Using Rod Numerals for Integers

Use your rod numerals to complete the following problems. Then answer the questions that follow.

a) $(-6) + 3 =$ _____

d) $9 + (-6) =$ _____

b) $(-2) + (-3) =$ _____

e) $8 + (-8) =$ _____

c) $5 + 8 =$ _____

f) $7 + (-7) =$ _____

Now that you have been investigating integer addition rules using rod numerals, explain what happens in the following scenarios:

1) You add two positive numbers (example c)

2) You add two negative numbers (example b)

3) You add a positive and negative number; the positive number has a larger absolute value. (example d)

4) You add a positive and negative number; the negative number has the larger absolute value. (example a)

5) You add a positive and negative number; the numbers have the same absolute value. (examples e and f)

6) Write a rule for the following:

a) When adding numbers with the same sign...

b) When adding numbers with different signs...

Handout 2 – p. 3 Answer Sheet for Handout 2

An amazing fact about Chinese math is that Chinese arithmetic was the first to allow negative numbers. The rod numerals came in two colors to represent positive and negative numbers. Red rods were used to represent positive numbers and black rods were used to represent negative numbers. The basic premise is that the equal numbers of black and red rods attract, make a pair, and then wipe each other out, leaving behind any remaining rods.

Study the following examples with different colored toothpicks.

Example: Cheng Cheng was promised three votes by different classmates. Later, those same classmates said they were taking back the votes (negative) and giving them to Luo Lei instead. How many net votes does Cheng Cheng have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = 0 \qquad 3 + (-3) = 0$$

Example: Xu Xiaofei is promised six votes from her classmates. She gains two more votes after her performance. How many net votes does Xu Xiaofei have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad 6 + 2 = 8$$

Example: Xu Xiaofei then loses one of her votes to Cheng Cheng. How many net votes does Xu Xiaofei have?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad 8 + (-1) = 7$$

Example: Luo Lei has no money in his piggy bank. He has already borrowed 2 yen from his friends at school. He hopes to influence some voters with candy that he will buy at the store, so he borrows 3 more yen from his parents. What is Luo Lei's net balance?

$$\begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|l|} \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline | \\ \hline \end{array} ; \qquad (-2) + (-3) = -5$$

Handout 2 — p. 4 Answer Sheet for Handout 2

Use your rod numerals to complete the following problems. Then answer the questions that follow.

a) $(-6) + 3 = -3$

d) $9 + (-6) = 3$

b) $(-2) + (-3) = -5$

e) $8 + (-8) = 0$

c) $5 + 8 = 13$

f) $7 + (-7) = 0$

Now that you have been investigating integer addition rules using rod numerals, explain what happens in the following scenarios:

- 1) You add two positive numbers (example c)

Find the sum. The answer is positive.

- 2) You add two negative numbers (example b)

Find the sum of the absolute value of the numbers. The answer is negative.

- 3) You add a positive and negative number; the positive number has a larger absolute value. (example d)

Subtract the absolute value of the negative number from the positive number. The answer will be positive.

- 4) You add a positive and negative number; the negative number has the larger absolute value. (example a)

Subtract the positive number from the absolute value of the negative number. The answer will be negative.

- 5) You add a positive and negative number; the numbers have the same absolute value. (examples e and f)

The answer will be zero.

- 6) Write a rule for the following:

- a) When adding numbers with the same sign...

Find the sum of the absolute value of the numbers and add the appropriate sign—positive if the numbers were positive, negative if the numbers were negative.

- b) When adding numbers with different signs...

Subtract the numbers. The answer will have the sign of the addends with the greater absolute value.

Investigating Rice

Enduring Understandings:

- The structure of a rice plant is complex, with variations that contribute to more than 40,000 different varieties, or cultivars.
- The stages involved in the production of a successful rice crop are elaborate and labor-intensive.
- The importance of rice as a major component of Chinese history, culture, economy, and diet directly correlates with the environmental conditions that exist in Southeast Asia.

Essential Questions:

- What is rice? What is the structure of a rice plant and how do rice varieties differ?
- Where does rice come from and how does rice crop production work?
- How is rice grown? What kinds of environmental conditions affect rice growth?

Notes to the Teacher:

Please Vote for Me shadows the experiences of three Chinese students at the Evergreen Primary School in Wuhan, China, who are each campaigning for a position as class monitor in their third-grade classroom. In addition to highlighting a novel encounter with the practice of a democratic election, this film offers a glimpse into daily student life at a Chinese school. The rice-based meals the students consume during their school day, for example, are featured throughout the film and reveal an important element of Asian culture.

This lesson is designed to introduce students to the importance of rice in many Asian communities. Students will first examine the structure of a rice plant and investigate different varieties of rice. Students will then have the opportunity to study the stages involved in the production of a rice crop. Finally, students will engage in a laboratory investigation that will examine the conditions necessary for optimal rice growth.

To prepare for the activities, review the information presented beforehand to ensure that all materials are prepared ahead of time. Note that Activity 1 requires the purchase and cooking of six rice varieties prior to the lesson. For Activity 2, you may want to research several farms or industries involved in local food production ahead of time that students may be familiar with. You might also want to search online for do-it-yourself board game guidelines or any other information that may help you introduce the concept of creating a game.

Activity 3 additionally requires the purchase of rice seed and a collection of lab materials ahead of time, as well as

weekly observations of the lab setup over a four-month period. For this activity, organically grown long-grain brown rice from the bulk bins at a store or in the bag seems to work best for growth. Organic rice will reproduce better than other long-grain brown rice because it has been relatively untouched by machines and chemicals. White rice will not germinate because the embryo is removed in the milling process. Brown rice will germinate to some degree because some embryos remain on the seed. To get good germination, the grain should still be inside the hulls. Rice seed is not commonly available except in rice growing areas. LSU AgCenter in Louisiana (see URL below) has provided seed to U.S. teachers throughout the country and may be able to provide seed to you if you are in the United States. If your program is outside the U.S., it is better to try to obtain seed locally to avoid the problems of importation of seed. A grow light or sunny windowsill will be sufficient for this activity.

Additional information about rice cultivation may be found at the following sites:

LSU AgCenter at www.lsuagcenter.com/en/crops_live-stock/crops/rice/

USA Rice Federation at www.usarice.com

Assessment:

Participation in group work

Participation in class discussions

Completion of **Handouts 1, 2, 4, and 5**

Completion of board game (see **Handout 4**)

Duration of lesson:

Two to five class periods (plus 16 weeks for recording observations in Activity 3)

MCREL Content Knowledge Science Standards Addressed by this lesson:

Standard 5. Understands the structure and function of cells and organisms

Level III: Grades 6–8

4. Knows that multicellular organisms have a variety of specialized cells, tissues, organs, and organ systems that perform specialized functions (e.g., digestion, respiration, reproduction, circulation, excretion, movement, control and coordination, protection from disease) and that the functions of these systems affect one another.
7. Knows that organisms can react to internal and environmental stimuli through behavioral response (e.g., plants have tissues and organs that react to light, water, and other stimuli; animals have nervous systems that process and store information from the environment), which may be determined by heredity or from past experience.

Standard 6. Understands relationships among organisms and their physical environment

Level III: Grades 6–8

2. Knows factors that affect the number and types of organisms an ecosystem can support (e.g., available resources; abiotic factors such as quantity of light and water, range of temperatures, and soil composition; disease; competition from other organisms within the ecosystem; predation).
4. Knows how energy is transferred through food webs in an ecosystem (e.g., energy enters ecosystems as sunlight, and green plants transfer this energy into chemical energy through photosynthesis; this chemical energy is passed from organism to organism; animals get energy from oxidizing their food, releasing some of this energy as heat).
5. Knows how matter is recycled within ecosystems (e.g.,

matter is transferred from one organism to another repeatedly, and between organisms and their physical environment; the total amount of matter remains constant, even though its form and location change).

Standard 7. Understands biological evolution and diversity of life

Level III: Grades 6–8

5. Knows ways in which living things can be classified (e.g., taxonomic groups of plants, animals and fungi; groups based on the details of organisms' internal and external features; groups based on functions served within an ecosystem such as producers, consumers, and decomposers).

Standard 11. Understands the nature of scientific knowledge

Level III: Grades 6–8

1. Understands the nature of scientific explanations (e.g., use of logically consistent arguments; emphasis on evidence; use of scientific principles, models, and theories; acceptance of displacement of explanations based on new scientific evidence).

Standard 12. Understands the nature of scientific inquiry

Level III: Grades 6–8

1. Knows that there is no fixed procedure called the “scientific method,” but that investigations involve systematic observations, carefully collected, relevant evidence, logical reasoning, and some imagination in developing hypotheses and explanations.
3. Designs and conducts a scientific investigation (e.g., formulates hypotheses, designs and executes investigations, interprets data, synthesizes evidence into explanations).
4. Identifies variables (e.g., independent, dependent, control) in a scientific investigation.
6. Uses appropriate tools (including computer hardware

and software) and techniques to gather, analyze, and interpret scientific data.

7. Establishes relationships based on evidence and logical argument (e.g., provides causes for effects).

Common Core English Language Arts Standards
Addressed by this lesson:

Science and Technical Details (Grades 6–8)

RST.6–8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

RST.6–8.2. Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RST.6–8.3. Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

RST.6–8.6. Analyze the author’s purpose in providing an explanation, describing a procedure, or discussing an experiment in a text.

RST.6–8.7. Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text with a version of that information expressed visually (e.g., in a flowchart, diagram, model, graph, or table).

RST.6–8.8. Distinguish among facts, reasoned judgment based on research findings, and speculation in a text.

RST.6–8.9. Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text on the same topic.

Materials:

Activity 1: An Introduction to Rice

World map or globe

Unlined paper

Pens

Small paper cups (e.g., Dixie); 6 needed per group of 3 students

1 cup cooked and 1 cup uncooked of each of the 6 rice varieties from Handout 2 (12 cups total)

Chopsticks (optional); 1 pair per student

12 plastic spoons (1 for each cup of rice)

Metric rulers

Electronic balance

Photocopies of Handout 1: What Is This Rice You Speak Of?

Photocopies of Handout 2: Rice: So Many Options!

Computer with Internet access

Activity 2: Rice Crop Production

Unlined paper

Poster board; 1 per group of students

Markers and colored pencils

Metric rulers

Photocopies of Handout 3: The Cycle of Rice

Photocopies of Handout 4: Rice Cycle Game

Computer with Internet access

Activity 3: Growing Rice

Empty plastic two-liter soda bottles; 3 per group of students

Scissors

Permanent markers

Potting soil; one large bag

Organic brown rice; long-grain (or a package of rice seed from a garden supply outfit)

Newspaper

Sunny windowsill or grow light

Small plastic bags

Graph paper

Photocopies of Handout 5: An Investigation of Rice Growth

Procedure:

Activity 1: An Introduction to Rice

1. Divide students into groups of three. For each group, assign a recorder, timer, and speaker. Ask students to raise their hands if they can remember where rice was featured in *Please Vote For Me*; call on a few students for their responses.
2. Tell students they will have three minutes with their group to brainstorm a list of all the foods they have ever had that contain rice. The recorder should write the group's responses on the blank paper provided and the timer should keep track of time.
3. Once three minutes are up, have the speaker for each group come to the board and write five items from their group list. Review the list with the class; invite students to raise their hands if they have had any of the foods listed.
4. Ask students if they know what rice is (e.g., where it grows, how it grows, what part of the plant rice is, where on the plant rice grows, etc.). Distribute **Handout 1: What Is This Rice You Speak of?**
5. Tell students that more than 40,000 types of rice exist. Explain that archaeologists have confirmed that China started planting rice at least 3,000 years ago. Explain that rice seeds were unearthed in the 1970s from Chinese Neolithic ruins near Zhejiang Province, marking the earliest record of rice planting in the world.
6. Allow the students to read over and study **Handout 1**

with their group. Call on three students to come to the front of the class. Have the first student name a structure, the second student explain the function, and the third student explain where on the rice plant the structure is found. Call on another set of three students to complete this activity for another structure on the rice plant. Continue until all structures and functions have been reviewed.

7. Have students work with their groups to complete the remaining portion of **Handout 1**.

8. Distribute **Handout 2: Rice—So Many Options!**

Allow students a few minutes to read over the information about rice shape, size, texture, and flavor with their groups.

9. Call on students to summarize the shape and size, as well as the texture and flavor of different rice varieties. Host a class discussion that reviews these differences between rice varieties. Explain that the students will be conducting an investigation to explore these differences using uncooked and cooked Sweet, Basmati, Jasmine, Red, Black Japonica, and Arborio rice. Be sure to identify the classroom location for the rice and supplies needed for the activity.
10. Have students review the procedure for this activity with their group; when they are ready, instruct them to begin. Remind students to enter their observations and data directly into Tables 1 and 2 as they work. If you are able to obtain chopsticks, use them for Step 9 when the students are taste-testing each of the six types of cooked rice.

11. When students have finished collecting data and their tables are complete, have them clean up their lab areas. Ask them to complete the analysis questions on the last page of the handout. Students should submit **Handouts 1** and **2** for assessment.

Activity 2: Rice Crop Production

1. Arrange students in groups of three. Ask students to list the foods they enjoy most that may grow or are produced locally. Then call on individual students to come to the board and record the name(s) of their favorite foods. When a list of favorite foods has been generated, discuss the main components of the foods and have the students identify which of the ingredients may have been produced locally. For example, if a student says “cheeseburger,” explain that the burger may have a bun, mushrooms, lettuce, or cheese that may have been produced locally—or even the meat.
2. Next, explain that some of the burger ingredients (e.g., the meat) may not have been grown locally. Ask the students where they may have come from and how they were transported. Explain that in the United States, foods are transferred to and from the different regions in which they are produced, but that some countries (like China) depend heavily on a more locally produced diet.
3. Explain that the students will be exploring why some foods, such as rice, grow only in certain regions. Ask students to volunteer ideas about what kinds of environmental conditions might be required for a rice

plant to grow (e.g., light, moisture, etc.). Explain that the growing success of a rice plant may change depending on the region or the type of rice; for example, one plant might need a lot of water and sun, while another might require shade and a reduced amount of water.

4. Have each student group brainstorm a list of environmental factors that may affect how a rice plant may grow in certain conditions or regions of the world. Using a map of the world or a globe, invite a student to locate China and ask the class to brainstorm what rice-growing conditions might be unique to that part of the world. Feel free to use foods common in other world regions as part of this discussion.
5. Explain the concept of a food staple as it might relate to diet and nutrition in various world regions and in China, specifically. Ask each group to list five staples in their own diets; invite students to share their responses.
6. Distribute **Handout 3: The Cycle of Rice**. Explain that rice is a food staple in China and discuss how Asian communities might be affected by the cyclical production of rice, both daily and seasonally. You may wish to access the following websites, which are snapshots of rice production from the perspective of Asian growing communities and may be helpful in illustrating the steps involved:

a. www.brucebriscoe.com/bali/rice.htm

b. www.sas.upenn.edu/~psanday/eggiricecycle.html

7. Have the students in each group choose two of the rice cycle steps listed (each group of three will cover all six steps)—preparing the field, planting, transplanting, growing, harvesting, and milling. On a sheet of blank paper, have the students summarize the two steps they chose and make a quick sketch on a blank sheet of paper of what they think each step might look like. Ask students to share their summaries with each other. Host a class discussion about the six steps of the cycle of rice production.
8. Distribute **Handout 4: Rice Cycle Game**. Using the instructions on the handout, have students work with their groups to create an educational game about the rice cycle that focuses on teaching about the steps involved in rice production. Ask the students to consider the details of each rice cycle step, the time each step requires (i.e., number of days), the equipment needed, the cost of different supplies, the environmental conditions required, and the labor involved. Encourage the students to find a way of incorporating these components into a creative and enjoyable board game.
9. Have the students complete **Handout 4** and share their game idea with you for approval. Once the games are approved, distribute one poster board, markers, and colored pencils to each group. Allow time for students to design and construct their board game.
10. If time allows, host a gallery walk of each game and give each group an opportunity to explain how their game works. Give students time at the very end to

play their own game or swap games with another group. Students should submit Handout 4 and their completed board games for assessment.

Activity 3: Growing Rice

Arrange students in groups of three. Distribute copies of **Handout 5: An Investigation of Rice Growth**.

1. Invite six students to the board and ask each to list one step of the rice cycle (from Activity 2). Review the details of each step and discuss the environmental conditions that might favor growth of a successful rice crop (e.g., rainfall, average temperature, exposure to light, nutrient availability, rice variety, etc.). Explain to the students that, for this lab, they will be exploring the water requirements necessary for healthy rice growth.
2. Tell the students to review within their groups the procedure and setup diagram on **Handout 5**. Distribute three plastic two-liter soda bottles per group. Make sure each group knows where to locate any other supplies needed for the lab, including the rice seed and potting soil.
3. When the groups are ready, ask them to complete the planting section of the lab. While setup for this section should be completed in the first class period, observations and data collection will span a 16-week period. (Note that students should create a hypothesis for their growth prediction in Step 7.) Note that the harvesting section should be completed once rice plants are mature enough (when stalks have changed

from green to gold—typically after Week 13).

4. After the rice plants have matured (sometime after Week 13) and have been harvested, instruct students to complete Table 1, and distribute graph paper for use during completion of the analysis questions. Students should submit **Handout 5** (including a graph of their results) for assessment. Remind the students that the roasting and cooking of their rice harvest should occur at home under the supervision of an adult.

Extension Activities

1. Assign a research project to assess where different types of rice are most commonly cultivated. Have students consider how differences in geographic location might relate to physical characteristics of the rice, soil conditions, and other environmental factors.
2. Have students research the cultural history of rice in China. Create a rice-themed classroom celebration using information from www.china.org.cn/english/2002/Oct/44854.htm.
3. Have students find and make a rice-based recipe. Hold a rice-tasting potluck meal and put together a class cookbook using the compiled recipes.
4. Assign a brochure project for which students must research the hazards of genetically engineered (GE) foods. Introduce the project using the information about China's 2012 decision to end the commercialization of genetically engineered rice, described at <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/news/features/China-says-no-to-genetically-engineered-rice/>.
5. Assign an essay for which students will consider the long-term effects of global climate variability on rice production in Asia.
6. Have students design and perform their own investigation for Activity 3. Have them generate their own variables and related hypotheses relating plant growth. Ideas could include soil quality (such as sand-to-dirt ratio), fertilizer type, amount or type of light, temperature, humidity level, type of rice, etc.

Handout 1 — p. 1 What Is This Rice You Speak of?

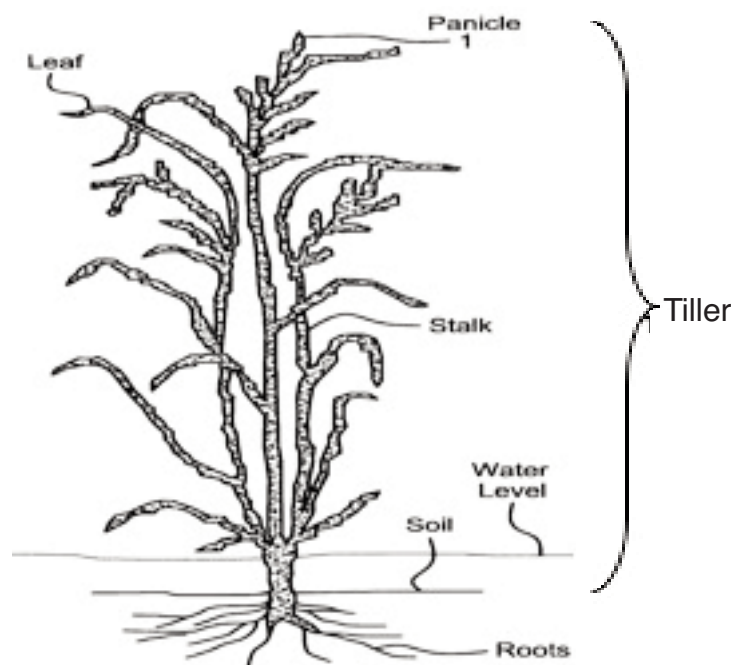
The rice featured in *Please Vote For Me*, *Oryza sativa*, is the same rice eaten by most of the world's population. It comes from a plant that grows submerged in water and that must make use of specialized structures in order to produce a single grain of rice.

The **roots** of a rice plant grow downward into the soil and anchor the plant to keep it from unnecessarily shifting in a moist environment. The roots are also used

by the plant to acquire water and other essential nutrients from the surrounding soil.

The **leaves** of a rice plant capture the sun's energy. The cells of each leaf contain chlorophyll, a specialized green pigment that converts sunlight into sugars through a process called **photosynthesis**. The leaves of a rice plant are long, thin, and grasslike—not surprising, since rice is scientifically classified as a grass. Sugarcane, corn, wheat, barley, and oats are also considered grasses.

The rice plant has rigid **stalks** (stems) that help support its many leaves and grains. Each plant has stalks that grow in groups called **tillers**, each of which has its own root system, stems, and leaves.



Sugars that are produced in the leaves are transported to **panicles** at the top of each stalk. Here, the sugars are converted into starch and stored for later use as energy by the plant in the form of individual grains. Each grain of rice grows at the tip of the panicle and is considered a seed; the plant uses these seeds to store the energy and nutrients to make new rice plants. When we harvest rice, we are essentially harvesting the starch that the plant has manufactured through photosynthesis.



A close-up view of a rice panicle with individual grains of rice

Handout 1 – p. 2 What Is This Rice You Speak of?

Directions: After reviewing the information about rice with your group, please respond to the following, below, to the best of your ability.

1. In the space below, draw an accurate diagram of a rice plant.

2. On your diagram above, label a root, stalk, leaf, panicle, grain, and tiller. Using dotted lines, show where the level of soil and the level of water would be in relation to the plant.

3. Describe the functions of each of the following structures of a rice plant:

a. Roots _____

b. Stalk (stem) _____

c. Leaves _____

d. Grain (seed) _____

e. Tiller _____

f. Panicle _____

Handout 2 — p. 1

Rice — So Many Options!

Overview:

Rice comes in more than 40,000 different varieties. While some rices have evolved naturally, others are hybrids that have been created by scientists to grow quickly or offer more nutrition. Rices are categorized by shape and size into long, medium, or short grain (as seen in the picture below). Rice can be further classified by a variety of textures and flavors into sweet, aromatic, and Arborio. While many of these types of rice can be substituted for each other in recipes, the differences in taste and texture among them are quite diverse.

Shape and Size:

- Long-grain rice: Grains are long and slender, four or five times longer than wide.
- Medium-grain rice: Grains are short and fat, two or three times longer than wide.
- Short-grain rice: Grains are short, plump, and nearly round; used for making sushi.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN SAICHUK, LSU AgCenter

Textures and Flavors:

- Sweet/waxy rice: Called “sticky” or “glutinous” rice; often used in frozen products.
- Aromatic rice: More flavorful and fragrant than regular rice; common varieties include Basmati, Jasmine, Red, and Black Japonica.
- Arborio rice: Large rice with a high starch content; used for risotto and other Italian dishes.

Handout 2 – p. 2 Rice — So Many Options!

Directions: In this activity, you will learn about the physical characteristics of six common rice varieties. You will compare grains from rices that are uncooked and cooked, as well as determine whether each variety examined is short-, medium-, or long-grain. Please follow the instructions below and record the data you collect in the tables provided. Be sure to use correct metric units when recording measurements for grain length and mass.

Procedure:

1. Obtain 6 small cups from your teacher. Label them with the names of the 6 types of rice listed in Table 1 (one type per cup).
2. Add 1 spoonful of grain from each category of uncooked rice to each corresponding cup.
3. Using the metric ruler and electronic balance, measure the length and mass of three individual uncooked grains. Calculate the average mass and length. Record your results in Table 1.
4. Describe the texture and color for each uncooked grain. Record your results in Table 1.
5. Discard the uncooked grains. Note: Keep your cups for Steps 6–10.
6. Add 1 spoonful of grain from each category of cooked rice to each cup.
7. Measure the length and mass of 3 cooked grains from each cup. Calculate the average mass and length. Record your results in Table 2.
8. Describe the texture, color, and aroma for each cooked grain. Record your results in Table 2.
9. Using the chopsticks provided, have each group member try a few cooked grains from each rice group. Describe the taste of each grain and record your results in Table 2.
10. Discard the cups and grains. When Tables 1 and 2 are complete, answer the Analysis Questions on the next page.

Rice — So Many Options!

Table 1: Uncooked Rice Observations

Type of Rice	Grain Length (mm)	Grain Mass (mg)	Texture	Color
Sweet				
Basmati				
Jasmine				
Red				
Black Japonica				
Arborio				

Rice — So Many Options!

Table 2: Cooked Rice Observations

Type of Rice	Grain Length (mm)	Grain Mass (mg)	Texture	Color	Aroma	Taste
Sweet						
Basmati						
Jasmine						
Red						
Black Japonica						
Arborio						

Rice — So Many Options!

Analysis Questions:

1. Based on your prior research and the data you collected, which of your six rice grain varieties would be considered short-grain? Medium-grain? Long-grain? Explain your reasoning.
2. How did the mass of the uncooked grains differ from that of the cooked? Explain. Give an example from your data to help support your answer.
3. Based on the aroma and taste data you recorded in Table 2, which is your favorite type of rice? Explain.
4. What other characteristics could your group have observed or recorded for your rice grains that were not included in this activity?

Handout 3 The Cycle of Rice in China

Rice consumption has increased dramatically over the past century relative to Earth's rising human population. The "rice cycle" (the amount of time required to produce one rice crop) lasts approximately three to four months and depends on the variety of rice and environment in which it is planted. With your group, please review the stages of this cycle, detailed below.

Preparing the Field: A rice field, called a paddy, must be level to allow water to cover it fully. It is surrounded by dikes to keep the water in, and there is also a drainage system to let the water out at the correct time. In hilly areas, paddies are located on a series of terraces. Building a paddy is therefore hard work. When the season begins, the farmer ploughs the paddy so that the root system can grow strong and nutrients can reach the plant. Fertilizer is sometimes added to the soil.

Planting: Rice seeds are planted in dry seedling beds in early spring for the best germination. The seedling beds are not in the paddy. When the seeds begin to sprout, the rice farmer floods the paddy with water to prepare it for the next step, transplanting the young rice seedlings.

Transplanting: After one to three months, when the seedlings are about 4 to 6 inches tall, they are ready to be transplanted to the wet paddy. The farmer must drain the paddy enough so that the lowest leaves of each rice seedling are still above water. The transplanting is done by hand, which is backbreaking work.

Growing: The farmer continues to irrigate the paddies carefully during the growing season and must fertilize the plants as they grow. As the plant matures, it flowers and develops several tillers along its main stem. (Look back at the illustration on **Handout 1**.) Each tiller has a panicle at the end, and this is where the rice grains grow.

Harvesting: When the rice is ready for harvest, the farmer drains the paddy and it begins to dry out. Some farmers use machines to harvest their rice, but the traditional way is still followed in many places: the farmer cuts the plants down with a sharp knife by hand. The rice plants are then bundled and moved to a dry place, where they are threshed to remove the grains of rice from the rest of the plant.

Milling: After threshing, the rice grains we eat are still inside rough seed hulls. (See the picture on **Handout 2**.) To remove the hull, farmers traditionally pounded the rice with large sticks, like pestles; today, farmers can use small milling machines or send the rice to a commercial mill. After milling, the brown rice (which still has a layer of bran on the outside of the grain) is separated from the husk. White rice is the result of further milling to remove the bran layer.



Handout 4

Rice Cycle Game

Directions: For this activity, you will use the information on the rice growing cycle that you studied on **Handout 3** to make an enjoyable and educational board game. Consider the details of each step involved in the rice cycle. Think about the amount of time (number of days) each step requires, the equipment needed, the cost of different supplies, the environmental conditions required for each step, labor involved, and challenges that a grower may face along the way. With your group, complete the worksheet below with your idea for a game that focuses on the journey of a rice crop from paddy preparation to full harvest. Ready, set, get creative!

Names of group members: _____

Name of your game: _____

What is the age range of your players? _____

What is the theme for your game? _____

Explain the rules and directions for your game. You may attach a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

Describe the game pieces you will use. _____

On a separate sheet of paper, sketch a rough draft of your board design. Consider what kinds of pictures or graphics you can use to help illustrate the educational concepts you are incorporating into your game. When you have finished your draft, your group may begin designing your game board using the poster board provided.

Handout 5 – p. 1 An Investigation of Rice Growth

Overview:

Rice is important to the history, culture, economy, and diet of most of the Asian population and to much of the rest of the world population. Like corn and wheat, the more than 40,000 varieties of rice that exist are grasses that must be replanted each year for harvesting.

Rice plants grow best in hot, humid climates, as well as in soil that is nutrient rich and poorly drained. Rice actually originated in dry areas and, over the years, has adapted to differing ecosystems. It is primarily grown in paddies that have been flooded and then plowed, but will grow well under any condition that allows the roots to be submerged in water for long periods of time. Paddy or “irrigated” rice, for example, grows well where a farmer can control the water, pumping it in and out as needed over the growing season. Deep-water rice, alternatively, grows near rivers and other bodies of water. The farmer takes advantage of the natural rising and falling water levels but has no control over them. The rice must be able to tolerate periods of drought as well as flood. Rain-fed lowland rice grows in monsoonal regions where lowland farmers build embankments around their fields to capture and hold the rain. Upland rice grows without flooding as long as the soil is kept somewhat moist. Typically, it is planted in areas with frequent rains. It may be grown in low-lying areas, on slopes, and even in drought-prone regions where irrigation water is readily available.

Rice is an unusual and interesting plant to grow in your classroom lab. One secret to a successful rice crop is using the correct amount of water, a challenge for a farmer who may be experiencing excessive rain or severe drought. For this investigation, you will explore the water requirements needed to grow rice. Once you have collected the necessary supplies from your teacher, you may begin setting up your lab using the instructions below.

Procedure:**Planting**

1. Start with three empty plastic 2-liter bottles. With a ruler, measure 6 cm from the top of each bottle. Cut this amount off the top of each bottle. (See Diagram 1 below.) If you have measured correctly, your bottles should now be 24 cm tall.
2. Starting from the very bottom of each bottle, measure and mark 1 cm increments up the side until you reach the top. Next, label every 5 cm until you reach the top. (See Diagram 1 below.)
3. Fill each bottle with 9 cm of potting soil.
4. Carefully add the following amounts of water to each of your bottles: Bottle 1: Fill to 13 cm. Bottle 2: Fill to 17 cm. Bottle 3: Fill to 21 cm. Do not shake the filled bottles.
5. Add 2 spoonfuls of the rice seed provided by your teacher to each bottle; the seeds should sink so that they are lying on top of the soil, yet under the water.

Handout 5 – p. 2 An Investigation of Rice Growth

6. Carefully place your bottles on a warm, sunny windowsill or under a grow light.
7. Consider how rice growth in each bottle might change as the result of different amounts of water. Predict what you think will happen to plant growth in each bottle over the 16-week observation period and write your hypothesis in the space below:

8. Observe your bottles on the same day each week for 16 weeks. Record your observations each week for plant height (in cm) and plant color (as well anything else you notice) for each bottle in Table 1. If nothing has changed, write “no change” for that week. Make sure the water level in each bottle remains consistent until Week 12.
9. At the beginning of Week 13, stop replenishing the water and allow the water level in each bottle to naturally lower until Week 16. (You will want your plants to be almost dry of standing water by the time you are ready to harvest.)
10. After you have finished collecting your data over the 16-week period, please complete the analysis questions below.

Harvesting

1. When your rice is ready for harvest, the stalks will change from green to gold. This should happen sometime after Week 13. Be sure to record this change in Table 1.
2. When your stalks are ready to be harvested, remove them by pulling them gently from the soil and out of the bottle.
3. Using scissors, cut the stalks at the base (just above the roots).
4. Discard the roots and wrap the stalks in newspaper. Place them in a warm, dry spot in your classroom for 2–3 weeks.
5. When your seeds are completely dry, they can be taken home and roasted on low heat (under 200°) for about an hour. When the seeds have cooled, the hulls can be removed by hand and the rice is ready to be cooked. *Note: An adult must be present for the roasting and cooking of your rice.*

Handout 5 – p. 3 An Investigation of Rice Growth

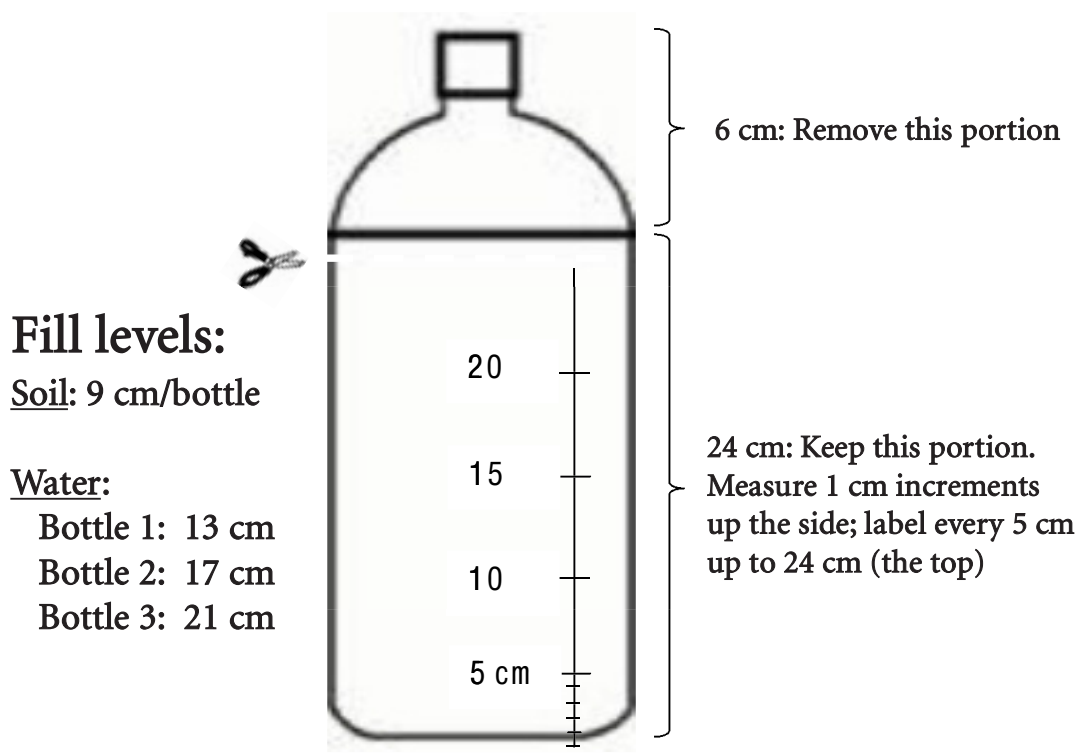


Diagram 1: Bottle Setup

Handout 5 – p. 4 An Investigation of Rice Growth

Table 1: Rice Growth Observations

Week #	Bottle 1 (water = 13 cm)		Bottle 2 (water = 17 cm)		Bottle 3 (water = 21 cm)	
	Plant Height (cm)	Other Observations	Plant Height (cm)	Other Observations	Plant Height (cm)	Other Observations
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13 (Stop adding water this week)						
14						
15						
16						

Handout 5 — p. 5 Investigations of Rice Growth

Analysis Questions:

1. What was your original hypothesis regarding the effect of different water levels on rice plant growth in your bottles? Explain your reasoning.
2. Under which conditions did your rice grow the best? The worst? Explain, citing examples from your data. (If your rice did not grow, explain why this may have occurred.)
3. Using the graph paper provided, construct three line graphs of your results—one for the plant growth in each bottle over the 16-week observation period. Place plant height (in centimeters) along the x-axis and time (in days) along the Y-axis. Be sure to label each line with the correct bottle number and associated amount of water used.

Handout 5 – p. 6

4. In the space below, describe how this laboratory investigation relates to the real-time production of rice. Explain why a rice farmer might be interested in the results of this type of research project. Be specific.
5. If you were to repeat this experiment, how would you change the procedure you used to make your data more accurate? Think about the amount of water used in each bottle, as well as the number of weeks you recorded observations. Be specific.
6. In this lab, you investigated the effect of water level on rice growth. List at least three other variables that could be tested in a similar investigation on rice growth. Then, in the space below, briefly describe an experiment that could be done to test one of these variables.

Folk Art: Chinese Papercuts (*Jianzhi*)

Enduring Understandings:

- Folk art is traditional art of a culture, which often uses designs and methods passed down from generation to generation.
- Papercuts have been created for thousands of years in China, and have spread to other countries.

Essential Questions:

- What does “folk art” mean?
- How are papercuts created?
- What kinds of patterns were used?
- What are the meanings behind some of the designs and colors?
- How are the papercuts used?
- What are some core beliefs of democracy?
- How can the idea of democracy be used as an inspiration for papercutting?

Duration of Lesson: Two periods

Assessment: Rubric (**Handout 4**)

Notes to the Teacher:

This lesson is designed to acquaint students with a traditional Chinese folk art, papercutting. There are two ways the art teacher could approach this subject. One would be to use traditional themes and designs from China. The second would be to have the students create their own designs using the idea of democracy and what it means to them. This lesson takes the latter approach: Students will design and execute a papercutting that reflects democratic ideals.

After introducing the concept of papercutting and sharing examples, lead a class discussion of democracy that focuses on certain core democratic values, including:

- **Justice**—All people should be equal before the law, which should be upheld with honor and integrity.
- **Diversity**—The nation embraces the variety of its citizens regardless of race, religion, age, sex, culture, or economic status.
- **Truth**—Government will be transparent and will not lie to the people.
- **Patriotism**—Citizens love their country and the values it stands for.
- **Equality**—People have the same legal and political rights regardless of race, religion, age, sex, culture, or economic status.
- **Popular Sovereignty**—The government is created by the people, draws its power from them, and is subject to their will.

- **Common Good**—Government works to ensure the welfare of all the people, not just of particular groups.
- **Individual Rights**—Each person has rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

After students have had a chance to explore these ideas, they design a papercutting that symbolizes one of these beliefs. (Note: Students who have studied Lesson 2 in this curriculum guide are already familiar with these ideas; you will just have to review these concepts briefly.)

There are two ways to teach the actual papercutting. One is to use scissors and the other to use mat knives. The choice will depend on whether the students will be careful enough with mat knives, whether there is sufficient space available for safety, and, of course, how the teacher prefers to work. The easiest way to teach papercutting is by folding the paper using a symmetrical design (think snowflake), but that is not the one chosen here.

If you have PowerPoint and a projector, it would be easy to turn this into a PowerPoint lesson. Copy and paste photos of papercuts that are readily available on the Internet onto your slides. Just put the term “Chinese paper cutting” into your search engine and then look for images. Then add the information on **Handout 3** (the photo demonstration). There are numerous sites online (see the resources section) with examples of papercuts. It would be a good idea to go over the concept of lines and their dimensions; how to create contour lines; how to use them to create shapes and negative space.

Once you have discussed the process of papercutting and generated some design ideas, students create their papercuts. They mat them when finished and fill out a self-evaluation rubric. The rubric may also be used for your own ease of grading.

Note that the tradition of papercutting is common to other countries, such as Mexico and Poland. This might lead to extension activities for your students, or the techniques illustrated here could be used in area studies classes on such countries.

McREL Visual Arts Standards Addressed by this lesson:

Standard 1. Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts

Level III (Grades 5–8)

1. Understands what makes different art media, techniques, and processes effective (or ineffective) in communicating various ideas
2. Knows how the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes can be used to enhance communication of experiences and ideas

Standard 2. Knows how to use structures (e.g., sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art

Level III (Grades 5–8)

1. Knows some of the effects of various visual structures (e.g., design elements such as line, color, shape; principles such as repetition, rhythm, balance) and functions of art.

2. Understands what makes various organizational structures effective (or ineffective) in the communication of ideas.

Standard 3. Knows how the qualities of structures and functions of art are used to improve communication of one's ideas

Level III (Grades 5–8)

1. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.
3. Knows how visual, spatial, and temporal concepts integrate with content to communicate intended meaning in one's artworks.
4. Knows different subjects, themes, and symbols (through context, value, and aesthetics) which convey intended meaning in artworks.

Standard 4. Understands the visual arts in relation to history and culture

Level III (Grades 5–8)

1. Understands similarities and differences among the characteristics of artworks from various eras and cultures (e.g., materials; visual, spatial, and temporal structures)
2. Understands the historical and cultural contexts of a variety of art objects.

Standard 5. Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others

Level III (Grades 5–8)

1. Distinguishes among multiple purposes for creating works of art
2. Understands possible contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks
3. Understands how one's own artworks, as well as artworks from various eras and cultures, may elicit a variety of responses

Materials:

Handout 1: Folk Art—Chinese Papercuts (*Jianzhi*)

Handout 2: Ideologies of Democracy

Handout 3: Creating a Papercut

Pencil

Black marker (chisel)

Black marker—fine-point felt-tip marker

Drawing paper

Tracing paper

Carbon paper—nonsmudging

Medium weight color paper; size may vary on design or origami paper

Sharp, short blade, pointed scissors or

Sharp, pointed mat knife and cardboard for table/surface protection (optional lesson)

Paper on which to mount design; color may vary

Glue

Soft brushes

Procedure:

1. Distribute and read through **Handout 1: Folk Art—Chinese Papercuts (*jianzhi*)** with your students. Show students samples of Chinese papercuts from the Internet or display samples you have printed out. Ask students to identify examples that they particularly like. Remind them that the children in the film *Please Vote for Me* might do papercuts like these in their art class. Tell them that they are going to make papercuts in class that have a special theme that comes from the film.
2. Remind students that the film was about an experiment in democracy and ask them to explain what the word democracy means. List the key qualities of democracy on the chalkboard, using information from “Notes to the Teacher” to augment the ideas contributed by the students. Have students make a list in their notebook. Ask students: What does each of these core beliefs mean to you personally? What examples could you give for any of these? How do they apply to your life? To the lives of those around you?
3. Discuss with students the different kinds of designs they could make to interpret one of the core beliefs. Consider such questions as:
 - Consider what you have learned about papercutting and the ideas of democracy. How would you illustrate one of those ideas in a design or symbol?
 - Where could you find some ideas? (Internet searches of each word; brainstorming with classmates.)
 - What color would best represent your idea?
4. Distribute **Handout 2: Creating a Papercut**, and **Handout 3: Photo Demonstration of the Papercutting Process** so that students can visually see and read each step.
5. Hand out pencils and paper to students. Explain to students how they should plan out their pattern on the paper using an interesting outline first as part of the design. Then have them create negative spaces that become part of the design by using varying styles of line within the outline shape and enclosing the areas that will be cut out.
6. Have students go back over their designs, simplifying and thickening lines so that each design becomes a contour drawing. Be sure that they understand that the lines are to create negative shapes that will be cut out between areas defined by lines, and they must make sure the lines are thick enough so that they do not break when the spaces between them are cut out. Each negative space is its own area: a line is between it and the next negative space to be cut out.
7. Have students go over these lines one more time with a black marker, so they are certain the lines are thick enough to define the areas to be cut out, and they know where to cut out the shapes between the lines.
8. Have students choose a color of paper that will best suit their ideas.
9. Using carbon paper, have students transfer their designs, in reverse if using words, to the back of the chosen color paper, being sure to draw each side of the thick lines so their thick contours remain clear.

10. Hand out the sharp pointed scissors or mat knives. Students will now cut out each negative space area between the lines, beginning with the center designs so that the design retains integrity as long as possible. Cut small areas first, leaving large open spaces and outline for last.
11. Give students sturdy white paper for mounting, watered-down glue, and soft brushes. Remind them that any glue that gets on the front will dry clear.
12. Ask the students to apply the glue, turn over their cutout, and apply it to the paper mat as a background.
13. Have the students sign and date the lower right corner. This enables you to know which way they want it displayed and shows pride in their work.
14. Have students clean up. Give them **Handout 4** and point out that it covers the steps they took to make the papercut. Direct them to grade themselves on each step. (Many students underestimate their own worth or ability in this. Those will be surprised when you actually give them higher points than they give themselves.)
15. Collect the rubrics. Grade them yourself, then either hand them back or attach them to the back of the matted cutting.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/pleasevote-forme/>

PBS website for Independent Lens video *Please Vote for Me*

Videos on papercutting:

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x6v57c_papercutting-an-art-in-china-with_news

Other useful websites:

<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/arts/papercut.htm>

<http://www.tongs-papercutting.com/>
(for free paper cutting patterns)

<http://www.funalliance.com/all/papercut/papercut.htm> (excellent site for examples)

Handout 1 — p. 1 Folk Art—Chinese Papercuts (Jianzhi)



A papercut illustrates a dragon puppet street celebration in honor of Chinese New Year.

ing gold and silver foil designs in their hair and men using cut symbols in religious rituals, then became used to decorate gates, columns, mirrors, and walls for celebrations. During the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911/12), many more skills were developed as tools and papers evolved. The papercut pictured at left illustrates a dragon puppet street celebration in honor of the Chinese New Year. The one below on the right suggests that, though the road home may be a long, long journey, there's no place like home.

The only tools required are sharp, pointed scissors (or a sharp knife) and one or more layers of colored paper, the favored being red. (Chinese artists sometimes used up to eight layers.) Some papercutters did drafts first and then made final cuttings, but the more outstanding crafter could cut out different drawings freely from memory, using the

Folk art is art that originates with the ordinary people of a country or region rather than art created by professional artists. Folk art usually reflects traditional designs and manufacturing techniques that have developed over generations.

Folk art is an art of the everyday, common person, usually depicting common, everyday events. This was an art that was not formally taught but simply created to fulfill a need to decorate and to tell stories; to pass on information about the people themselves and their lives. It is handed down from generation to generation and becomes more refined through the years.

In China, the folk art of papercutting began about two thousand years ago, after the invention of paper by Cai Lun in 105 A.D. The

Chinese put paper to many good uses, with cutting shapes for decoration being one of the most popular. These designs, first used by women past-



A papercutting illustrates that the road home may be a long, but there is no place like home.

Handout 1 — p. 2

Folk Art—Chinese Papercuts
(*Jianzhi*)

knife or scissors without stopping. Knife cuttings are fashioned by putting several layers of paper on a relatively soft surface. Then, following a pattern, the artist cuts the chosen design into the paper with a vertically held sharp knife. The advantage of knife cuttings is that considerably more cuttings can be made in one operation than with scissors. Though relatively small when finished, these designs represent Chinese life boldly and naturally by using lines and shapes as simply but as informatively as possible, telling much through the nature of the lines and the shapes used.

The themes of the works reflected varied aspects of life, from mundane everyday tasks to the prayers or wishes for prosperity and health; they sometimes told stories of a major accomplishment in life. Papercuttings carried special significance at festivals, at weddings and other celebrations, and on holidays. For New Year's, entrances were decorated with papercuttings that were believed to bring good luck. The bright colors used—greens, blues, and reds—all helped to express the festiveness of the occasion. Some of these designs were used in creating embroidery and Chinese lacquer work as well. (This used to be one of the crafts that every girl was to master; potential brides were even judged in part on this skill. Even royal women were expected to demonstrate papercutting dexterity.)

Today, papercuts mainly decorate doors and windows and are commonly known as “*chuang hua*,” or “window flowers.” They are still made mainly by women and girls, a common pastime in rural areas. The professional papercutting artists, however, are men, who have guaranteed incomes and work together in workshops.

Color as a Language

As in many other cultures, certain colors have specific meanings in traditional China. Although meanings may vary by particular regions, in general the following symbolic connections are true:

Red corresponds with fire and symbolizes good fortune and joy.

Black corresponds with water and is considered a neutral color.

Green is associated with health, prosperity, and harmony.

Blue-green, symbolic for wood, represents nature and renewal and often designates spring with its new vitality and vigor.

Blue symbolizes immortality, but darker blue is a color for solemn occasions like funerals and deaths.

White, corresponding with metal, represents gold and symbolizes clarity, purity, and fulfillment.

Yellow, corresponding with the Earth, is considered the most beautiful color.



Handout 2 — p. 1 Creating a Papercut

Here are the steps to follow to make your own papercut with a theme of democracy:

1. After you have read the handout on papercutting and thought about the core beliefs of democracy, look carefully at the examples your teacher has provided. Pay special attention to how the shapes and lines are formed.
2. Discuss with your teacher the different kinds of designs you could create by using one of the ideologies.
 - a. What do you envision when you think of that word?
 - b. How could you make the design so that it is easy to cut?
 - c. What will the outside shape be?
3. Using a pencil, sketch your design on the paper your teacher has given you, creating negative spaces that become part of the design by using varying styles of line and closing in these areas. Be sure the entire design shape itself is interesting.
4. Go back over your design, simplifying and thickening lines so that it becomes a contour drawing. Remember that the areas you will be cutting are the negative shapes between the thick lines. The lines must be thick enough so that they do not break when they are cut out, and each negative space is its own area: a line is between it and the next shape.
5. Go over these lines one more time with a black marker, so you are certain that they are thick enough and that you know exactly where to cut out areas.
6. Now choose a color of paper that will best suit your idea.
7. Using carbon paper, transfer your design to the back of the chosen color paper, being sure to draw each side of the lines so they stay thick. You will need to reverse your design first if you are using words.
8. Using very sharp, pointed scissors or a mat knife, gently push the tool through the paper to cut out each space. Start from the center and work outward, so that the final cuttings are done on the outer area and the piece retains strength as long as possible.

Handout 2 — p. 2 **Creating a Papercut**

- 9.** Mount or mat your papercut on a plain piece of white paper using a soft brush and glue. The glue should be applied to the side that has the carbon markings on it. (Any glue that gets on the front will dry clear.) Use the back of your thumbnail to smooth any bumps in the design.
- 10.** Clean up your area.
- 11.** Sign and date the matting (background) in the lower right-hand corner. This helps your teacher to know which way to hold the drawing; it also shows pride in your work.
- 12.** Fill out and hand in your self-assessment.

Handout 3 — p. 1

Photo Demonstration of the Papercutting Process

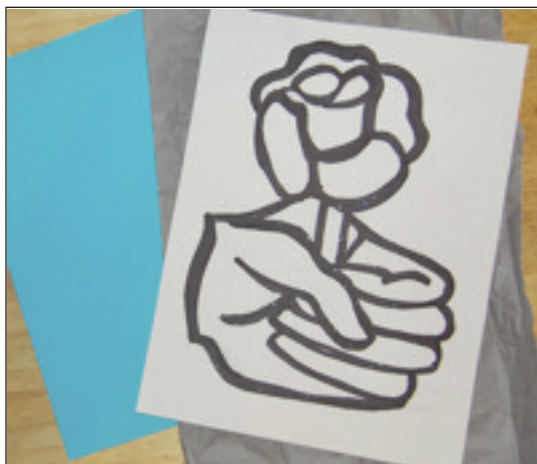
The following photo demonstration could illustrate several of the core democratic beliefs, but was chosen for the “Common Good”— the offering of a hand and of a rose, which is a symbol of hope, joy, and love. The turquoise paper was chosen because it is symbolic of nature and renewal and often designates spring’s new vitality and vigor.



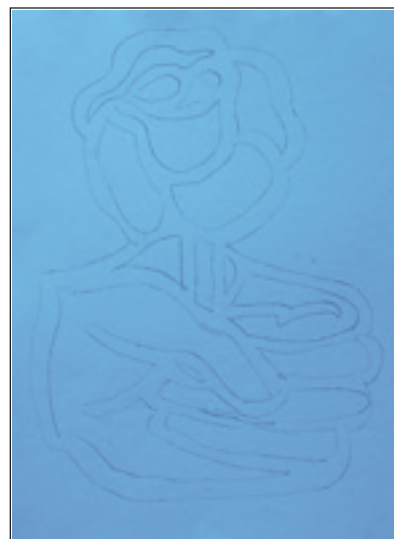
The preliminary sketch (Step 3)



Go over your sketch with thick black lines. (Step 6)



Transferring the design (Step 8)



Transfer completed (Step 8)

Handout 3 — p. 2

Photo Demonstration of the Papercutting Process



Cutting out the design (Step 9)



All smaller areas have been cut out. Just the larger areas and outline need to be completed.



The carbon side is up for glue to be applied. (Step 10)



Completed. The cutout is glued to the mat. It is ready for signing and dating! (Step 10)

Handout 4 Folk Art: Chinese Papercuts Rubric

Student Name: _____ Date _____

Class: _____

Directions: Each requirement is worth 3 points. Give yourself the grade point(s) from 0 to 3 that you feel you deserve for each under “S” (for Student). Your teacher will assign final grade points under “T.” There are 30 possible points in all.

S	T	Criteria
		Read and viewed the informational handouts and participated in class discussion.
		Created, simplified, and completed a drawing representing a core belief of democracy for transfer to the final colored paper.
		Transferred the design to the colored paper for cutting, drawing the double lines to keep them thick.
		Was able to cut the paper carefully, without tearing and needing to repair or start again.
		Chose a color and design that illustrated the chosen belief well.
		Glued the papercut neatly to a white background.
		Cleaned up work area thoroughly and promptly.
		Created a finished, colorful, decorative, and informative papercutting.
		Signed and dated the mat with fine felt-tip marker when completed.
		Was focused, worked diligently, and was cooperative throughout project.
		TOTAL

Grading scale: 27–30 points = A
 24–26 points = B
 21–23 points = C
 18–22 points = D
 17 points or below = F

A Glimpse of Chinese Culture

Enduring Understandings:

- Visible cultural characteristics and invisible cultural values are both important in understanding our own society and that of another cultural group.
- Americans tend to be individualistic, whereas Chinese culture fosters a sense of the importance of the group.
- China's One-Child policy has reduced population growth but has social and economic costs.

Essential Questions:

- What is meant by the term “culture”? What are cultural values?
- What are some basic elements of Chinese culture?
- What is the difference between individualism and collectivism?
- What are the effects of the One-Child policy in China?

Notes to the Teacher:

This lesson is designed to teach students about some elements of Chinese culture that they observed in the film *Please Vote for Me*, and to give them an understanding of culture and cultural values in general. Culture is frequently compared to an iceberg. The easily visible portion above the water is like easily visible cultural traits: specific foods, holidays, and dress, for example, which help define a society. Below the waterline, invisible at first glance, is a much larger mass of cultural values and customs, which require greater and sustained observation to understand. (For more lessons on culture, see the reference to the online booklet *Building Bridges*, a highly relevant, free resource from the Peace Corps cited in “To the Teacher” at the beginning of this unit.)

In the United States, individualism, the freedom to “choose my own way,” “make my own decisions, based on my own criteria,” and the responsibility “to accept the consequences of my own choices,” is highly valued. In China, a collective or group orientation is more highly valued. For example, individuals often do not make their own choices. Rather, they often consult their elders and adhere to rules set up to guide individuals through decision-making. The needs and considerations of family, colleagues and work place, and community come first. This lesson gives students the chance to consider the basic tenets of individualism and collectivism and to examine how traditional proverbs reinforce these concepts.

Proverbs and popular sayings are capsules that offer insight into a culture's values and beliefs. They are often

passed on from generation to generation as a legacy of common folk wisdom. People tend to accept them, in an uncritical way, as “truths” learned by their elders and community leaders. Proverbs often have great influence on the assumptions, motivations, and behavior of the members of a culture precisely because they are absorbed at an early age and then are taken for granted.

You may find that your students react strongly to the behavior of Mrs. Zhang’s third graders in the film. They sometimes seem out of control, bullying each other, even making others cry without teachers stepping in to control the class. This may be a consequence of the individual teacher’s effort to “experiment” with democracy without knowing a great deal about how “democratic” classrooms in the United States operate. This is not typical of China’s school system. For regular sessions, e.g., in math, the students are well disciplined. Students are not allowed to speak unless they have the teacher’s permission. There is no chatting and they must pay attention. Of course, some students will do minor things when the teacher turns his or her back to write on the blackboard, but if caught, they would be disciplined by the teacher, for example, by having to stand in or outside the classroom as punishment.

The third part of this lesson deals with China’s One-Child policy. **Handout 5** acknowledges the gender imbalance in China’s population—currently roughly 120 males to every 100 females. This is a result of selected prenatal screening followed by abortion, or even now-outlawed female infanticide. Use discretion in discussing these facts with students, depending on their maturity and your community’s values. You may wish to use short

videos to supplement classroom instruction. Some useful ones:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VocQIHLKxM&feature=related> A bit dry, but a very informative video in PowerPoint style (12 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gaNqdGIHkM>

Interviews with Chinese citizens in China; offers pro and con content (10 minutes)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-xwd_affr4

From *60 Minutes* news show in 2007; focuses on gender imbalance as a consequence of policy (12 minutes)

Note: Be sure to preview all videos; some videos that can be found on YouTube show aborted fetuses, which would be disturbing to your students.

Duration of Lesson:

Three class periods

Assessment:

Completion of

Proverb posters

Editorials

Materials:

Part 1:

Copies of **Handout 1**

Part 2:

Whiteboard/chalkboard

Red and blue construction paper

Scissors

Markers or crayons

Glue sticks or glue

Copies of **Handouts 2, 3, and 4**

Part 3:

Copies of **Handout 5**

MCREL Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Behavioral Studies

Standard 1. Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior

Level III: Grades 6–8

1. Understands that each culture has distinctive patterns of behavior that are usually practiced by most of the people who grow up in it
2. Understands that usually within any society there is broad general agreement on what behavior is “unacceptable,” but that the standards used to judge behavior vary for different settings and different sub-groups and may change with time and in response to different political and economic conditions

Geography

Standard 15. Understands how physical systems affect human systems

4. Understands relationships between population density and environmental quality (e.g., resource distribution, rainfall, temperature, soil fertility, land form relief, carrying capacity)

Language Arts

Standard 1. Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

Level III: Grades 6–8

5. Uses content, style, and structure (e.g., formal or informal language, genre, organization) appropriate for specific audiences (e.g., public, private) and purposes (e.g., to entertain, to influence, to inform)
10. Writes persuasive compositions (e.g., engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a persona,

and otherwise developing reader interest; develops a controlling idea that conveys a judgment; creates and organizes a structure appropriate to the needs and interests of a specific audience; arranges details, reasons, examples, and/or anecdotes persuasively; excludes information and arguments that are irrelevant; anticipates and addresses reader concerns and counter arguments; supports arguments with detailed evidence, citing sources of information as appropriate)

13. Writes business letters and letters of request and response (e.g., uses business letter format; states purpose of the letter; relates opinions, problems, requests, or compliments; uses precise vocabulary)

Common Core Standards

addressed by this lesson:

Writing

Grade 8

1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
 - a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
 - c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
 - d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3.)

Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies

Grades 6–8

2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Procedure:

Part 1: What Is Culture?

1. Write the word “culture” on the board. Ask students to list all the words that come to mind when they think of culture and list their ideas on the board. Students will probably suggest the following:

Architecture	Greetings
Religion	Language
History	Ethnicity
Sports	Clothing
Etiquette	Economics
Music	Traditions
Food	

2. Add the following elements of culture to your list if students have not already suggested them:
 - The use of silence
 - Family structure (immediate nuclear family or extended family living together or nearby)
 - Myths, folklore, and literature
 - Effects of climate – how it affects culture (clothing, open or closed architecture, outdoor orientation)
3. Write the following definition of culture on the board and have students copy it into their notebooks: Culture is the learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a group of interacting people, which are transmitted from generation to generation.

4. Referring to the lists in #1 and #2, discuss with students how most of these examples are visible or explicit characteristics of a culture. Use the image of the iceberg to illustrate your point. (See “Notes to the Teacher.”) Ask whether any elements of culture are not so visible. Guide the conversation toward looking for invisible characteristics of culture. Write the definition of the term cultural values on the board and have students copy it: Cultural values are the commonly held standards by which a group of people judge what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, etc.
5. With students, develop a second list on the board, identifying invisible components of culture.

Suggested answers:

Relationship with nature
 Notions of leadership
 How time is used
 Ways to handle emotions
 Notions of modesty
 How elders are treated
 Religious beliefs
 Notions of beauty
 Child-raising
 How friendships are formed
 Work ethic

6. Arrange students in small groups and ask each group to list three examples of visible elements of Chinese culture and three examples of cultural values illustrated in the film *Please Vote for Me*. After a few minutes, ask each group to share one observation on its list. Tell them they should not repeat something that was previously shared.
7. Distribute **Handout 1: Culture and Cultural Values**. Ask the student groups to work together to identify the cultural values represented in the behaviors they saw in the film. (Suggested answers: 1. Health and wellness; 2. Discipline; 3. Health and wellness; 4. Respect for elders; 5. Health and wellness; 6. Appreciation for art and music.)

Part 2: Collectivism and Individualism

1. Distribute **Handout 2: Opinion Survey** and have students take the survey to determine their individual beliefs. Then distribute **Handout 3: Collectivism and Individualism**. Give students the time to calculate their own scores. Assist those who need help.
2. Designate one corner of the room as “Collectivism” and the opposite corner as “Individualism.” Ask students to stand along an invisible line from one corner to the other, arranging themselves by their final score, with the highest scores toward the Individualism corner. (Remind them about positive and negative numbers if necessary; the largest negative numbers should be in the Collectivism corner.) Discuss: Does the class seem to value individualism or collectivism more?
3. After students are seated, ask them to define the word proverb. Explain that a proverb is a short saying with a message that teaches a lesson. Share information about proverbs from “Notes to the Teacher.” Write the following examples on the left side of board:

Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

You’ve made your bed, now lie in it.

Don’t cry over spilled milk.

4. Ask students to add to write down as many proverbs they can think of which are most frequently heard. Ask students to volunteer examples from their list and add those to the board, in the left column.
5. Review the definition of “cultural value.” Have students determine what cultural value is reflected in each proverb. Write that cultural value on the right after the proverb.

Sample answers:

Early to bed, early to rise...

—Diligence/hard-work

You’ve made your bed, now lie in it.

—Responsibility/personal choice

Don’t cry over spilled milk.

—Practicality

God helps those who help themselves.

—Initiative

A man’s castle is his home.

—Privacy, private property

It’s not whether you win or lose,
it’s how you play the game.

—Good sportsmanship

6. Have students count off by twos. Distribute **Handout 4: Chinese and American Proverbs**. Tell students to choose a proverb from the list; ones should choose an American proverb and twos should choose a Chinese one.
7. Distribute construction paper, giving a blue sheet to the ones and a red sheet to the twos. Tell students to print their proverb neatly on the bottom half of the paper and write its meaning below it.
8. For homework, tell students they are to find pictures online or in a magazine or newspaper to illustrate the proverb. Pictures should be pasted in an appealing arrangement on the top half of the construction paper. When students have completed their Proverbial Picture Page, set aside a time so they can share their work. You may want to use their proverb pages to decorate a bulletin board.
3. Ask students to give you as many reasons as they can to support the One-Child policy. List them on the board. Then ask them to give you as many reasons as they can to oppose the policy, and list those on the board, as well.
4. For homework, assign students to write a letter to the editor, urging either the extension or repeal of China's One-Child policy. Tell them to be sure to give reasons for their position and to use both logical and emotional appeals. Depending on the ability and sophistication of the class, you may also wish to require them to examine and refute counter-arguments or to do additional research.

Note: Suggested answers to **Handout 1:**

1. Health and wellness
2. Discipline
3. Health and wellness
4. Respect for elders
5. Health and wellness
6. Arts and Music

Part 3: China's One-Child Policy

1. Ask students what they noticed about the parents in the film *Please Vote for Me*. (They involved themselves in their children's campaign, even when the children were reluctant to have their help; they carried the children in to school when it was raining.) What did you notice about the candidates' brothers and sisters? (Students should note that there were no siblings in any of the families.) Why do they you think this was the case? (China has a one-child population policy.)
2. Distribute **Handout 5: FAQs about China's One-Child Policy**. Read it aloud with students and be sure they understand what it means.

Handout 1 — p. 1

Culture and Cultural Values

Directions: Read each of the examples of Chinese culture observed in the film *Please Vote for Me*. In the line to the right, write what cultural value is reflected by each example. If you have other observations about Chinese culture that you saw in the film, write them in the empty boxes at the end of the handout and identify their cultural value(s) on the line to the right.

Classroom Customs in China Observed in the Film

Cultural Value(s) Represented

1. Large group exercise as gym class. This is a common activity in parks and office buildings, as well as in school, and is popular in other Asian countries.

2. Class monitor. This student is typically chosen by the teacher and helps to enforce classroom rules.

3. Nap time in third grade. In China, students stay at school longer than students in the U.S. Elementary school begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m.

4. Practice of bowing by students entering classroom. In general, bowing is a common way to express respect toward an elder or someone in authority.

Culture and Cultural Values

Classroom Customs in China Observed in the Film

5. Eye exercises. These are used for massaging tired eye muscles. A recording typically prompts this activity over the loudspeaker or PA system.

6. Music instruction. All the candidates played musical instruments. Formal music instruction begins in kindergarten and includes singing, dancing, and instruments through fifth grade.

Cultural Value(s) Represented

Handout 2

Opinion Survey

Directions: Next to each statement, write a number from 1 to 5 that indicates how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1 = Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3 = No opinion 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

Score	Concept
_____	Challenging elders or authority figures such as teachers is acceptable. You should be free to question authority.
_____	Society should always encourage continuity and tradition.
_____	Citizens should identify themselves as part of a community, family, or nation more than as individuals.
_____	Competition is valuable.
_____	Cooperation and harmony are valuable.
_____	Each person should be an active player in society, to do what is best for society as a whole rather than for himself or herself.
_____	Expression of personal opinions is a good idea, even if one's opinions are different from the opinions of one's peers.
_____	Maintaining group harmony is important, even if one's personal opinion is contrary to group opinion.
_____	The rights of families, communities, and the collective supersede [are more important than] those of the individual.
_____	One should celebrate individual goals, initiative, and achievement.
_____	People should be encouraged to do things on their own and to rely on themselves.
_____	Society should always encourage innovation and change.
_____	Challenging elders or authority figures such as teachers is not acceptable.
_____	The rights of families, communities, and the collective supersede [are more important than] those of the individual.

Handout 3

Collectivism and Individualism

Directions: Copy the numbers you filled in on your opinion survey into the appropriate box. Then add up your scores in each column to calculate your total score.

Traits of Collectivism. “WE” identity	Traits of Individualism / “I” or “ME” identity
The rights of families, communities, and the collective are more important than those of the individual. <input type="text"/>	The rights of families, communities, and the collective are less important than those of the individual. <input type="text"/>
Maintaining group harmony is important, even if one’s personal opinion is contrary to group opinion. <input type="text"/>	Expression of personal opinions is a good idea, even if one’s opinions are different from the opinions of one’s peers. <input type="text"/>
Challenging elders or authority figures such as teachers is not acceptable. <input type="text"/>	Challenging elders or authority figures such as teachers is acceptable. You should be free to question authority. <input type="text"/>
Each person should be an active player in society, to do what is best for society as a whole rather than for himself or herself. <input type="text"/>	One should celebrate individual goals, initiative, and achievement. <input type="text"/>
Citizens should identify themselves as part of a community, family, or nation more than as individuals. <input type="text"/>	People should be encouraged to do things on their own and to rely on themselves. <input type="text"/>
Cooperation and harmony are valuable. <input type="text"/>	Competition is valuable. <input type="text"/>
Society should always encourage continuity and tradition. <input type="text"/>	Society should always encourage innovation and change. <input type="text"/>
Total Collectivism Score <input type="text"/>	Total Individualism Score <input type="text"/>

Final score: Individualism score minus Collectivism score = _____
 (Remember to indicate if this is a positive or negative number.)

Handout 4

Chinese and American Proverbs

Directions: Choose an American or Chinese proverb as your teacher directs. Print it neatly on the bottom half of your paper and write an explanation of what the proverb means underneath it. Then make a collage of pictures illustrating the meaning of the proverb on the top half of the paper.

Chinese Proverbs

- The bird that sticks out his head gets shot.
- A family in harmony will prosper in everything.
- The bird that flies out beyond its flock is the first one targeted by hunters.
- A single conversation with a wise man is better than 10 years of study.
- No need to know the person, only the family.
- Each generation will reap what the former generation has sown.
- To know the road ahead, ask those coming back.
- When you drink the water, remember the spring.
- If you want happiness for an hour; take a nap. If you want happiness for a day; go fishing. If you want happiness for a month; get married. If you want happiness for a year; inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime; help someone else.
- One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade.

American Proverbs

- If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.
- God helps those who help themselves.
- If the shoe fits, wear it.
- Pull yourself up by your bootstraps.
- If you want a job done well, do it yourself.
- As you sow, so you shall reap.
- Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.
- He who hesitates is lost.
- Make hay while the sun shines
- Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

Handout 5 — p. 1

FAQs About China's One-Child Policy

What is the One-Child Policy?

Ever since 1979, China has had a policy in place requiring married couples who belong to China's ethnic Han majority and who live in urban areas to limit their family to one child. The law was recently updated to allow a couple who are both only children to have two children of their own.

Why was the law passed?

China's huge population made it difficult for the nation to progress and even to supply enough food to its citizens. In 1962, for example, a famine caused the death of about 30 million people.

How does China encourage people to follow this policy?

It offers longer maternity leave to couples who wait longer to have a child. A couple with only one child receives a Certificate of Honor for Single-Child Parents. Parents of just one child may receive a salary bonus. Single children are entitled to free schooling and free medical care; the family may receive preferential treatment for housing. People with only one child in rural areas may receive more land.

What happens if a family has more than one child?

Couples can be fined the equivalent of thousands of dollars, even up to a year's salary. The family loses access to free medical care and education benefits if they have a second child. There have even been reports of women forced to have abortions or to undergo sterilization so that they could not have any more children. The parents may receive a reduced salary or even be fired from their jobs.

Handout 5 — p. 2

FAQs About China's One-Child Policy

Are there exceptions to this policy?

Yes, there are exceptions:

- If you are a member of one of the smaller ethnic groups
- If you become pregnant after adopting a child
- If there is a lack of a male in the family line (if first child is a girl)
- If first-born child has a disability and is likely unable to work as an adult

How effective has this policy been?

Since 1979, this policy has probably prevented more than 300 million births. This has helped to encourage China's economic expansion.

Are there negative side effects, as well?

Boys have traditionally been favored over girls, and as a result, there are many more males than females in the population. There is also a shortage of young workers. As China's population ages, many people are worried that there will not be enough young workers to support the elderly.

About Documentary Films

Enduring Understandings:

- Making a documentary film is a complex undertaking, involving many people with different skill sets.
- There are many different genres of documentaries, but all should try to be informative and accurate.

Essential Questions:

- What is a documentary film?
- What are the key techniques that make a documentary film different from other films?
- How does one make a documentary film?

Notes to the Teacher:

Media literacy should be a crucial part of a young person's education in language arts and other disciplines. As Ann Hornaday, film critic for the *Washington Post*, has written, "Media literacy—the ability to think skeptically and discerningly about the visual information that constantly bombards us from multiplex screens, our televisions, and the Web—has become as necessary a component of civic life in the 21st century as basic literacy was in the 20th." Media literacy must be taught; it will not be absorbed by osmosis by the average student.

This lesson asks students to think about the nature of documentary films. What makes a documentary different from a feature film? Documentary filmmakers often feature on-screen interviews with academic experts, other people with experience in the subject, and ordinary man-on-the-street subjects. The film may be composed wholly or partially of still photographs, such as the ones used so effectively by Ken Burns in his documentary *The Civil War*. Documentaries often have text and graphics that provide necessary information and serve to link scenes. There is often a narrator's voice providing additional information not obvious from the video footage. A convincing documentary will provide the viewer with evidence in support of the filmmaker's views or even with an open-ended exploration of conflicting evidence. But probably the most important factor in a documentary is the purpose of the film: to record history, to express an opinion about a controversial issue, to inform, rather than primarily to entertain.

To judge the value of a documentary, the educated

viewer must consider the information provided by the film, but must also judge how filmmaking techniques—choice of setting, use of various camera angles, lighting, music, color, and sound—can all reflect the point of view of the filmmaker and his or her stance on the subject of the documentary.

The director of *Please Vote for Me*, Weijun Chen, is a journalist and award-winning filmmaker who lives in Wuhan, China, the town in which the elementary school in the film is situated. His purpose in making the film, as described on his website, was “to determine how democracy would be received if it came to China.”

The hands-on project of making a documentary is a complex task that will demand cooperation, planning, written and oral skills, and persistence. To make a film in class, each group of students should select a school-based activity to document in film. The teacher will function as executive producer, overseeing the project and helping to resolve problems. Some activities to document might be the production of a school play, the organization of a dance, a school election, a community-service project, athletic training for sports teams, or the activities of a debate team. It is important to check on your school’s policies regarding filming students and to discuss the project with your administrator before beginning. The exact process will depend on the technology (cameras, iPads, smart phones, etc.) and software available at your school. Depending on the technology available, the age of your students, their level of interest and the time available, each student documentary should run from three to ten minutes in length. Allow the students as much freedom as possible in interpreting their sub-

ject, but tell them that their goal is to be as factual, objective, and truthful as possible.

Consider having a film festival at the end of this project to allow your students to showcase their films to a wider audience.

For more information on making classroom documentaries, see the following websites:

<http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2006/06/08/our-town/>

<http://www.cura.umn.edu/sites/cura.advantage-labs.com/files/publications/39-3&4-Dockter-Lewis.pdf>

www.okcss.org/Mini%20Documentaries.pdf

<http://www.slideshare.net/acarvin/documentary-making-101>

Duration of Lesson:

Three class periods, plus time to make the documentary and to screen it for the class.

Assessment:

Class discussion

Documentary planning sheet (**Handout 2**)

Student-created documentary

Self-evaluation (**Handout 3**)

MCREL Language Arts Standards

Indicators addressed by this lesson:

Behavioral Studies

Standard 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Level III: Grades 6–8

1. Understands a variety of messages conveyed by visual media (e.g., main concept, details, themes or lessons, viewpoints)
3. Knows typical genre of different visual media (e.g., in television: sitcoms, talk shows, news broadcasts, interviews, children's programs; in film: westerns, musicals, horror, gangster)
6. Understands how symbols, images, sound, and other conventions are used in visual media (e.g., time lapse in films; set elements that identify a particular time period or culture; short cuts used to construct meaning, such as the scream of brakes and a thud to imply a car crash; sound and image used together; the use of close-ups to convey drama or intimacy; the use of long camera shots to establish setting; sequences or groups of images that emphasize specific meaning, differences between visual and print media)

Standard 10. Understands the characteristics and components of the media

Level III: Grades 6–8

1. Knows characteristics of a wide range of media (e.g., television news favors messages that are immediate and visual, news photographs favor messages with an emotional component)
2. Understands the different purposes of various media (e.g., to provide entertainment or information, to persuade, to transmit culture, to focus attention on an issue)

5. Understands aspects of media production and distribution (e.g., different steps and choices involved in planning and producing various media; various professionals who produce media, such as news writers, photographers, camera operators, film directors, graphic artists, political cartoonists)

Materials:

DVD of *Please Vote for Me* and DVD player

A copy of **Handouts 1** and **2** for each group

Access to camera and video-editing software

Procedure:

1. Ask students to name any documentary programs they have watched in the past year. (Most have probably seen nature or history documentaries at home or in school.) Elicit a definition of “documentary” and ask for examples. (A film that is intended to be factual or nonfiction, often made to educate the viewer about an important subject. Note: If students use “reality” shows as examples, remind them that those shows often are more fictional and artificial than real, despite the term “reality.”) Categorize the examples by genre: travel, nature, history, news footage, etc.
2. Tell students that *Please Vote for Me* is a documentary created by a Chinese journalist and filmmaker, Weijun Chen, who lives in Wuhan, the city where the school is situated. Ask what they think his purpose was in making this film. (To record the impact of a first experiment in democracy in a setting where democracy is an unfamiliar concept.)

3. Break students into five groups. Ask each group to focus on one of these topics: setting, camera angles, use of music, color, and character development. Show the first 10 minutes of the film and ask students to answer the questions that follow, recording their observations in their notebooks.

- What are the indoor and outdoor settings for the first part of the film? (The schoolyard and the third-grade classroom) How does the filmmaker use these two locations? (The schoolyard morning exercise scene gives him a chance to show how regimented children's lives are and the patriotic stance that is expected of them.) What do you notice about the crowd at the edge of the playground watching the children's morning routine? (Although this is a typical morning, they are very interested in watching their children participate and are perhaps reluctant to go.) What is the role of parents in this film? (The parents become involved with the campaign, offering bribes, writing speeches, and coaching their children.) How does the opening of the film introduce the main themes of *Please Vote for Me*? (The children interviewed have no concept of democracy or voting; the parents are very involved in their children's lives.)
- How does the director use long-range, mid-range, and close-up shots in this film? (The long-range shots from above show the highly regular positioning of the children and the almost military precision of their morning routine. The mid-range scenes allow the viewer to see teacher-student and parent-child interactions. The close-ups allow the viewer to eavesdrop on the children and to see their emotional reaction vividly throughout the film.)
- How does the director use music? (By showing the children singing a patriotic song and translating the

words in the subtitles, he shows the viewer the traditional expectations of unquestioning patriotism.)

- How does the director use color? (The most obvious color used is bright red. If you start from the title menu, the opening frames have first a red overlay and then a red background. The Chinese flag is red, the color symbolizing the Communist Party; most of the children wear red neckerchiefs no matter what else they have on. Red is not only a patriotic color, but one that has always symbolized prosperity and joy. The red is a constant reminder of the Communist system that the democracy experiment is deviating from.)
 - What do you learn from the first 10 minutes of the film about the children and their parents? How does the director show characterization? (The children all seem to be interested in being class monitor, but they are reluctant to have their parents become involved at first. This is shown by both dialogue and body language.) Do you think it was a good idea to follow all three students, or was it confusing to you? (Answers will vary.)
4. Ask the class: Do you think the presence of the camera made a difference in how these children and their parents and teachers behaved? How difficult would it be to film a documentary in a classroom?
5. Tell the class that they are now going to plan how to make a documentary film themselves. Assemble groups of 5–7 students and distribute **Handout 1: Your Production Team**. Explain the roles of each member of the production team and then give students time to meet in groups to choose roles and name their production company.
6. Distribute **Handout 2: Planning Your Documentary**, and allow students ample time to discuss possible

Lesson 8

ideas and begin planning while you move from group to group and answer questions. Be sure that each student group chooses a different subject for its documentary.

7. Give students three deadlines: the date the planning sheet must be completed, the date for the filming to be completed, and the date the production company must turn in the film.
8. After the films are in and have been viewed, distribute **Handout 3: Self-Evaluation** and have each of the students write a narrative evaluation of their group's film and their own experience in producing it.

Handout 1

Your Production Team

Directions: Many different people contribute to the making of a documentary besides the people seen on camera. Here are the roles that members of your group will be expected to play. Fill in the names of your production company and the group member(s) who will fill each position:

Name of your production company_____

Role	Responsibilities	Group member responsible
Executive producer	Oversees entire project, resolves problems that arise.	Your teacher
Producer	Chooses the subject of the documentary, plans the project, and decides who will be responsible for each aspect of production.	All group members will share this role.
Researcher	Finds out information about the topic, identifies people who should be interviewed for the documentary, checks facts, finds out any missing information needed to make the documentary complete.	
Writer	Writes scripts for the narrator. Writes explanatory text when necessary. Writes questions for interviews. (See “interviewer,” below.) Writes the credits that will appear at the end of the film.	
Director	Identifies and sets up scenes to be filmed. Chairs planning meetings and records answers for Handouts 1 and 2.	
Interviewer	With writer, writes questions for interviews and conducts interviews. Asks spontaneous follow-up questions to get more information.	
Narrator	Provides narration to give the film coherence and fill in necessary information.	
Camera operator	Checks locations to be sure they are appropriate and well lit. Does the actual filming of the documentary.	
Editor	Assembles various pieces of film into one documentary. Adds narration and explanatory text over scenes when appropriate. Makes copy of the documentary available to the teacher and participating students.	
Music director	Researches and adds appropriate music that enhances the overall impact of the documentary.	

Handout 2 •

Directions: Work with your group to outline how you are going to produce your documentary. Remember that good planning at this stage will eliminate many headaches later.

- 1.** What will be the subject of your documentary? (Write two or three sentences explaining why this is an interesting topic to pursue.)
- 2.** What is the purpose for your documentary? What point of view do you think you will take?
- 3.** What will be the time frame for your film? When will the activity you are covering start and when will it end?

Handout 2 – p. 2 Planning Your Documentary Film

4. What locations will be important in your film? How accessible are they? Who are the people you will need to contact to gain access to the location and get permission to film?
5. Who will appear on-screen in your documentary? What are their roles in the activity you are documenting?
6. What is the title of your film? What will the title frame look like? Who will design it?
7. Who will appear in the credits of your film? (To be completed as the project goes forward)
8. In the chart on the next page, plan the scenes you need to set up and film. Ask your teacher for another copy of the next page if you need additional space

Handout 2 • p. 3 Planning Your Documentary Film

Scenes to be filmed for _____ (documentary title)

What happens in the scene?	Where will the scene be filmed?	Who needs to be there?

Handout 3 — p. 1

Self-Evaluation

Part I. How would you rate the film produced by your group for the following characteristics? Rate your film on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being “Poor” and 5 being “Excellent.” In the space underneath each score, explain as fully as possible why you gave that score.

1. Accuracy Score (check one): ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

2. Thoroughness Score (check one): ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

3. Coherence Score (check one): ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

4. Clear point of view Score (check one): ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

Part II: Rate your group on a scale of 1 to 5 and comment.

1. How would you rate the participation of individual group members?

Score (check one): ____1 ____2 ____3 ____4 ____5

Handout 3 – p. 2

Self-Evaluation

2. What were your responsibilities? How do you evaluate your own performance?

Score (check one): _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4_____5

3. How cooperative was the group? Did group members help each other and work together?

Score (check one): _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4_____5

4. How would you rate your experience on this project?

Score (check one): _____1 _____2 _____3 _____4_____5

Part III. What would you do differently next time?

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