

**A rationale for the proposed unit:** This group of lessons is put together to achieve a level of understanding of memoirs and primary sources while learning about children's lives during the Cultural Revolution. According to 6<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts Standards, students should be able read and comprehend literary non-fiction and be able to compare and contrast ideas from different sources (memoirs, diaries, biographies, etc.) Through reading excerpts from Ji-li Jiang's memoir in *Red Scarf Girl* and Da Chen's biography in *China's Son*, the student will read and discuss first-hand accounts from children, learning about what their lives were like in China during the Cultural Revolution. Both Ji-li and Da Chen were finding their paths and searching for their identity, and our students are encouraged to find their voices as well.

### **Learning about Memoirs through Primary Resources**

**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup>

**Essential Understanding:** The students should be familiar with narratives, diaries, and biographies. Students will use their background knowledge of the aforementioned to understand the meaning of a memoir and its purpose. Students know how to compare and contrast two different documents in an essay.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will have a clear understanding of memoirs and primary sources. The students are able to use sensory details, cite examples, and clear sentences to write a compare and contrast essay about Ji-li Jiang's and Da Chen's childhood experiences during the Cultural Revolution in China.

**Common Core Standard(s):**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2

Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3

Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.9

Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.9.A

Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics").

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

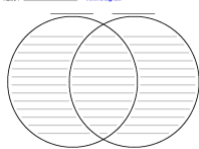
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**Questioning:** Why do people write memoirs? Why is it important to read primary sources and first-hand accounts rather than only research facts or read a fictional story about that time? How did Ji-li Jiang's and Da Chen's experiences relate? How did they differ?

Day 1	Resources
<p><b>Intro/Warm-up:</b> Watch a short Flocabulary video on Primary Sources. Share screen slide of primary source and memoir definitions.</p> <p><b>PRIMARY SOURCE:</b> In the study of history, a primary source is an <b>artifact, document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, memoir, recording,</b> or any other source of information that was created at the time under study. It serves as an original source of information about the topic.</p> <p><b>MEMOIR:</b> A historical account or biography written from personal knowledge or special sources.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/primary-secondary-sources/">https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/primary-secondary-sources/</a></p>
<p><b>Guided Practice:</b> Students are asked if any of them has a journal or diary during a 5-8 minutes class discussion.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.docholley.com/upload/red_scarf_girl_-_ji-li_jiang.pdf">https://www.docholley.com/upload/red_scarf_girl_-_ji-li_jiang.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Research/Discovery:</b> Students take turns reading out loud chapter 1 of <i>Red Scarf Girl</i>, practicing their fluency, learning about Ji-li, and discovering the style of the memoir. They write notes in their Venn Diagrams.</p>	
<p><b>Closing:</b> Students discuss Ji-li and what they learned about her from the first chapter.</p>	
<p><b>Day 2</b></p>	

<p><u>Intro/Warm-up:</u> Watch video about biographies/autobiographies.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.floracabulary.com/unit/biography/">https://www.floracabulary.com/unit/biography/</a></p>
<p><u>Research/Discovery:</u> Students take turns reading out loud chapter 1 of <i>China's Son</i>, practicing their fluency, learning about Da Chen, and discovering the style of autobiography/memoir. They continue to write notes in their Venn Diagrams, using the other circle.</p>	<p><a href="https://betterlesson.com/community/document/2944684/china-s-son-memoir-pdf">https://betterlesson.com/community/document/2944684/china-s-son-memoir-pdf</a></p>
<p><u>Closing:</u> Students work in breakout rooms to collaborate on what commonalities the two sources share. They record their findings in their Venn Diagram.</p>	
<p><b>Day 3</b></p>	
<p><u>Intro/Warm-up:</u> Brief whole class discussion on comparisons and contrasts in the two stories.</p>	
<p><u>Writing:</u> Students are given the task to take their notes (Venn Diagrams) and the pdfs of the two stories and to write a 3-5 paragraph compare/contrast essay about the two stories and the author's depictions of their life at that time (just based on their first chapters.)</p>	
<p><u>Assessment:</u> Students will submit their typed compare/contrast essay. The students will be assessed based on the information rubric attached.</p>	

**Follow up:** Students choose which memoir to continue to read as their independent reading book.

**Extension(s):** Students write their own narrative as a memoir. They follow the attached narrative rubric and use the two stories for guidance.