

Soft Power in East Asia

A CASE STUDY OF CHINA, KOREA, AND JAPAN

Jessica Rodarte (Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts)

LAUSD (Central District)

DISCIPLINE: History/Social Sciences

COURSE: World History

GRADE: 10

CONTEXT

This lesson will happen near the end of the year. At this point the students will have studied contemporary East Asia and we will be in the unit focusing on the globalization and global powers. The focus is generally on military and economic power but this year we will add some work on soft power which permits nations to grow their prominence in the world stage through peaceful means that are rarely seen as threatening or aggressive, but that nevertheless demonstrate the economic and cultural might of nation-states.

OBJECTIVE

To have students understand and compare the ways in which governments leverage their power in ways that are not about the military or about economic dominance, but about culture. This type of power known as “soft power” is perhaps even more important and effective than military power because it happens in ways that are seen as unassuming, benevolent, and about the diffusion of culture to the receiving nation, resulting in the receiving nation happily ceding some of its cultural space to the exporting nation. The exporting nation then sees its global dominance and reputation strengthened.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How do governments exercise their dominance over other nations?
- What kinds of cultural elements are used to exercise dominance? In the US? In other countries?
- How do K-Pop, Chinese production companies, and Japanese anime help their respective countries to take more prominent places on the world stage?
- How has globalization affected the ways in which governments exercise power?

STANDARDS

CA Framework

- 10: Nation Building in the Contemporary World
- 11: Economic Integration and Contemporary Revolutions in Information, Technology, and Communication

CA State Standards

- 10.10: Students analyze instances of nation-building in the contemporary world in at least two of the following regions or countries: Middle East, Africa, Mexico, and other parts of Latin America, and China.
 - Discuss the important trends in the regions today and whether they appear to serve the cause of individual freedom and democracy.
- 10.11: Students analyze the integration of countries into the world economy and the information, technological, and communications revolutions (e.g., TV, satellites, computers).

Historical Thinking Skills:

- Historical Comprehension
- Historical Analysis and Interpretation
- Historical Research Skills
- Historical Analysis and Decision Making

Common Core Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6
Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

MATERIALS

- Computers/Laptops
- Articles
 - China:
 - [China's Influence over Hollywood Grows](#) by Ana Swanson (The Washington Post)
 - [The Real Source of China's Soft Power](#) by Thomas Barker (The Diplomat)
 - [China Soft Power Part II: Beijing turns to Hollywood to win Hearts and Minds](#) by Dan Southerland (Radio Free Asia)
 - Korea:
 - [How K-Pop became a propaganda tool](#) by Lucas Oakely (The Outline)

- [K-Pop: A Political Weapon](#) by Kion You (Brown Political Review)
 - [K-Pop: Soft Power for the Global Cool](#) by Linda Constant (Huffpost)
 - [Korea’s Cultural Juggernaut is a Soft-power Strategy Worth Copying](#) by Steven Kim (The National Interest)
 - Japan:
 - [Japan has turned its culture into a powerful political tool](#) by Taku Tamaki (The Conversation)
 - [Japan’s pop culture and literature drive soft power](#) by Roland Kelts (The Japan Times)
 - [Japan cashes in on popularity of “soft power” anime](#) by (Independent)
- Videos:
 - Chinese Productions:
 - How China is changing Hollywood (Vox): <https://youtu.be/8R-FQTY4KJk>
 - Chinese Influence in Hollywood is growing, changing the films you see (Today): <https://youtu.be/vrk0DVTwzdU>
 - K-Pop:
 - 100 Iconic K-Pop Songs (The K-Pop Universe)
<https://youtu.be/ZWr7legxTBw>
 - Japanese Anime:
 - Hayao Miyazaki Movies (Hollow Moonshine)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxD_fo3xtqQ&list=PLUvc-rHVDrCwuON-yuX4f2ORCe0rMj85q
- Access to internet

PROCEDURES

DAY 1

- Warm Up
 - In student notebooks, answer the following question in 2-3 sentences: How do governments exert their power on other nations across the world?
- Define
 - In student notebooks, define: soft power, globalization, foreign relations
- Soft Power
 - Divide class into 3 groups: Chinese soft power, Korean soft power, and Japanese soft power
 - Distribute appropriate articles to each group. Have each group read their assigned articles and write summarizing notes in their notebooks.

DAY 2

- Warm Up
 - In student notebooks, answer the following question in 2-3 sentences: What kinds of cultural elements are used to exercise dominance? In the US? In other countries?
- Videos

- Have each group view the assigned video(s). They should take notes on the videos, paying close attention to the ways in which soft power is being exhibited and why these entertainment mediums are effective.
- Posters
 - Have students in their groups create posters on the soft power of each country. Their posters should include:
 - definition of soft power
 - name, flag, and outline of country
 - 5 examples of soft power within their particular category
 - For each example, they should write a short paragraph explaining how they are instruments of soft power.

DAY 3

- Posters
 - Finish working on posters, they should be colorful and easy to understand (clear language, useful visuals, neat organization, etc)
- Gallery Walk
 - Have students post up their posters around the room. Students will then walk around the room and take notes on each of the posters around the room.
- Exit ticket
 - Have students answer the following questions using the information you learned through the articles, videos, and posters: What is soft power? How do governments exercise this power? How do you know that it is effective?
- Homework
 - Soft power is about exerting power through the use of culture. Research what other kinds of cultural elements China, Korea, and Japan are exporting to the rest of the world. Give 3 specific examples. For each, list the country of origin, include a visual, explain what the example is, how widespread it is, and how it's being used to persuade the world of the prominence and global power of its country of origin.