

## Philosophical Traditions in East Asian Literature

### Lesson Objectives

The primary learning objectives are for students to develop an appreciation of East Asian philosophy and thought while also using the source materials as an opportunity to reflect on their own values, experiences and observations.

Students will:

1. Become familiar with the writing styles and traditions of Confucius' *Analects*, excerpts from the *Tao Te Ching*, and Zen Buddhist teachings and parables.
2. Be able to identify examples of parallelism, paradox, and Buddhist teachings.
3. Create their own maxim or parable in the style of the *Analects*, *Tao Te Ching*, or Zen parables teachings.

Materials:

1. McDougall Littell the Language of Literature: World Literature, pages 420-444, 486-496, 510-517
2. Unlined white paper
3. Notebooks

Day 1:

1. Begin by KWL on China.
2. Lead students using Cornell Notes format in exploring the introductory information on China starting on page 420, paying particularly close attention to Confucianism and Taoism.
3. Have students note the foundations and goals of Confucianism and Taoism.
4. What are the contributions of China to 21<sup>st</sup> century America?
5. If there is time, start reading the first selection from the *Analects*.

Day 2:

1. Begin by talking about the two major stylistic elements of parallelism and paradox.
2. Have students read a few more selections from the *Analects* quietly to themselves. Pair-share with a partner on identifying elements of parallelism and paradox. Five minutes
3. Go over the reading selection, giving students an opportunity to identify examples of parallelism.
4. Ask students to paraphrase the *Analects*, picking their top three. Share out to the whole group; students should give explanations
5. Tie back to the core values of Confucianism and the historical context.

Day 3:

1. Begin with silent reading on page 440: refresher on paradox.

2. Students should be taking notes on the introductory materials on Taoism, paying particular attention to the contrasts between Confucianism and Taoism.
3. Is there always going to be ONE right way of reading it? What does it mean?
4. As the class begins reading from the *Tao Te Ching*, have them note paradoxes they see and also write down what they think the paradoxes mean.
5. After 5-10 minutes, check to see what students have done/ come up with.
6. Relate information about other paradoxes that they may be more familiar with.
7. Finish with the story "The Fish Rejoice" on page 444. What are the main ideas of this story? How does it exemplify Taoist teachings?

#### Day 4

1. Begin introductory information on Japan (486- 497), students taking notes as the information is covered in class.
2. Focused note taking on Zen teachings and parables starting on page 510, paying particular attention to Muso Soseki.
3. Define what a parable is: identify examples of parables that students may already be familiar with.
4. Go over Zen readings from pages 512-515. Analysis and paraphrase!
5. Pay particular attention to the propensity in Zen writings of disproving the negative.

#### Assessments

1. Formative assessments will be taking place on each day through informal checks for understanding and checking on student notes.
2. Students will produce a one page document that incorporates visuals and a maxim or parable that they must create in the style of Confucius, Lao Tzu, or Muso Soseki. Student work will be evaluated based on the use of paradox, parallelism, disproving the negative, and passive voice.
3. Students will get 1-2 minutes to present their artifacts using the document camera. Maxims are required to have a brief explanation of what they mean/ the context they were written in.