

Tribunal on the Opium Wars AP World History

Overview/Rationale:

In order to measure student understanding of the historical events and consequences surrounding the Opium Wars, students will represent a party involved in these events during a tribunal, which will determine their complicity in crimes against historical humanity.

Objective:

10.4 Students analyze patterns of global change in the era of New Imperialism in at least two of the following regions or countries: Africa, Southeast Asia, China, India, Latin America and the Philippines.

Big Idea:

Injustice in our world is complex and deeply rooted.

Essential Questions:

- Why was China used as a market for Opium in the 19th century?
- What role has exploitation and domination played in human history?
- How did racism play a role in the Opium Wars?
- What can we learn from the experience of the Chinese people during the Opium Wars?
- What is the legacy that the Opium Wars left on China and our world today?
- What role has human exploitation played in history and economics?
- How has the importance of market and economic dominance played a role in the world today?

Materials:

- World Civilizations: The Global Experience 4th Edition. Pages 629-638, 653
- Video link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIhfGtH3am8>
- AP World History by Research and Education Association. Page 330

Crime in question:

According to historical international human rights law, the question that must be answered is: Who should be held accountable for the crimes against humanity that were committed against the Chinese people during the Opium Wars?

Students will be assigned a party to represent that has been charged as a possible conspirator to the crime in question. It will be up to students and their group to develop a series of arguments to defend their party. Students will present testimony before a panel

of judges who will listen to a three-minute presentation and ask the defendants a series of questions for an additional 2 minutes.

You are to work in groups to come up with a graphic organizer (chart), which explains your thesis and arguments (supported by facts). Then, you are to independently write a speech. The testimony will be your speech. Your testimony must come from portions of each speech and must be read in front of the panel of judges the day of the tribunal.

After all parties in question have stated their cases in front of the tribunal, students will have an opportunity to witness the panel deliberate amongst themselves to decide which party(ies) are liable.

Role Playing – Instructions for students/defendants

Group A: Opium Traders

These defendants claim that their party was only trying to compete with other businessmen. Additionally, according to the defendant, the opium sold by them helped the local and national economy to grow. Students may also rely on the fact that the use of opium had existed for hundreds of years in China as medicine and that it was a common way of healing people of various problems.

Group B: Opium Consumers

You are the individuals that consumed the drug. Countless families and communities were destroyed because of your addiction. Although you claim that you cared for your nation and its people, it was your consumption of opium that created the profits for English sellers and drained your economy of billions in wealth and led to a massive loss in economic productivity. You claim that the drug was so powerful that it compelled you to behave as you did.

Group C: Chinese Government

As the centers of power in China, your people depended on you to create policy that will look after their interests. You could have united your people together and defended them, but chose instead to permit the opium drug trade to grow until British traders had a powerful foothold in the region. You claim that you did all that you could, but that the British government, with its powerful navy, was too much to overcome.

Group D: British Government/Parliament

As the legislators of the most powerful empire at the time, you could have put a halt to the plan to force opium upon the people of China, but your ability to create policy was clearly influenced by powerful financial interests tied to the drug trade. You claim that if

you had not gone along with the plan to push opium onto a sovereign nation, then you would have been replaced by someone who would.

Group E: Banks

This group provided the funds, which made the entire drug trade network possible. A portion of the profits from businesses and individuals tied to opium eventually found its way to you. One of your main arguments of defense is that you were simply following the law and trying to help the economy of the empire.

Group F: The British Monarchy

As a figurehead of the British Empire, you still hold great cultural although not much political influence. The British people still listen to your words and are influenced by your ideas. The requests from the Chinese government asking you to intervene and stop the plans to force opium into China were met with indifference. Your main defense is that you no longer could shape policy in the empire and help the Chinese people even if you wanted to, which you probably didn't.

Group G: Judicial Panel

The panel's job is to become familiar with each of the six parties' level of responsibility and arguments as well as to ask each of the groups questions about their complicity. After each group has had three minutes to present their position and then answer the panel's questions, the judges will openly discuss which group(s) should be held liable for the crimes in question.

Students will do the following as a panel:

- Select a chairperson to call upon the groups and lead the questioning.
- Discuss each group's positions so that students are familiar with them.
- Prepare at least two questions to ask each group after they have presented their arguments.
- Vote on each of the groups' level of complicity, in alphabetical order, and openly decide on their guilt.
- Decide on the punishment. The panel has the international authority to impose a judgment that will exercise a form of rehabilitation, retribution, deterrence, or incapacitation. This will be turned in as a five-paragraph essay the following day. Each judge is to complete his or her own essay.

TIMELINE

Day 1

Warm Up:

- Introduction of topic and essential questions
- Students to watch supporting video clip:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIhfGtH3am8>
- Overview of Unit—goals, assignments, etc.

Instruction:

- Students will read: *World Civilizations: The Global Experience 4th Edition*. Pages 629-638, 653
- They will also read *AP World History by Research and Education Association*. Page 330

Interaction:

- Students will work in groups of four to create their own Cornell notes from the reading materials.
- The notes must have a thesis, outlined notes, a reflection, 3 student made questions, and 3 terms with definitions.

Wrap up:

- Students are to answer the questions on post it notes:
Why was China used as a market for Opium in the 19th century?
What role has exploitation and domination played in human history?
How did racism play a role in the Opium Wars?

Day 2

Warm Up:

- Students are to answer the question and share:
What can we learn from the experience of the Chinese people during the Opium Wars?
- Randomly divide up students to create six seven even groups

Instruction:

- Students are to work in their groups to either create the questions if they are member of the judge's panel or, if they are a member of groups A-F, then they are to use their notes and readings to create an outline for their persuasive essay.
- The outline may contain reasons for their innocence or arguments for why another group is guilty.
- Each student should have at least three solid premises supporting their argument and each student should have as many different premises as possible.

Interaction:

- Working in their groups, they should work as independently as possible to write a draft of their five-paragraph essay.

- They should talk with one another to read portions of their work to test for effectiveness.

Wrap Up:

- The students are to answer the questions on exit cards:
 - What can we learn from the experience of the Chinese people during the Opium Wars?
 - What is the legacy that the Opium Wars left on China and our world today?

Day 3

Warm Up:

- Students are to reread their essays and work in their groups to decide what the order will be to give their testimony.
- They are to highlight the portions of their essays that will be used as testimony

Instruction:

- Tribunal hearings and testimony presented in class with microphones, tables, and podiums to administrators and selected classes.

Interaction:

- Students are to listen to the judges decision on which group(s) are guilty of the crime in question and what the punishment(s) is/are to be.
- Judges are to provide a written five paragraph essay to the teacher the following day which explains their decision, the punishments, and if there was any disagreement on the decision.

Wrap Up:

- Students are to answer the questions on a separate sheet:
 - What is the legacy that the Opium Wars left on China and our world today?
 - What role has human exploitation played in history and economics?
 - How has the importance of market and economic dominance played a role in the world today?

RUBRIC

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- All members participate.
- Presentation is comprehensible and message is clear.
- Strong effort is evident.
- Essay has a clear and specific thesis/argument that can be supported.

- Clear understanding of the POV, topic, and research/ historical perspective in both presentation and essay.
- Arguments are evident and well supported in essay and presentation (logos).
- Substantive support that is verifiable in essay and presentation (ethos)
- Essay is logically organized, with correct and varied syntax and vocabulary.

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- Most members participate.
- Presentation is generally comprehensible and message is clear.
- Sufficient effort is evident.
- Essay has an adequate thesis that is generally supported.
- Demonstrates adequate understanding of the POV, topic, and research/ historical perspective in both presentation and essay.
- Arguments are evident and supported in essay and presentation (logos).
- Sufficient support is verifiable in essay and presentation (ethos)
- Essay shows organization, with comprehensible syntax and vocabulary.

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- Some members participate.
- Presentation and message are often unclear.
- Limited effort.
- Essay has a convoluted thesis with minimal evidence.
- Demonstrates inadequate understanding of the POV, topic, and research/ historical perspective in both presentation and essay.
- Arguments are vague in essay and presentation (logos).
- Insufficient support in essay and presentation (ethos)
- Essay is unorganized, often comprehensible with incorrect syntax and vocabulary use.

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- Little to no participation.
- Incoherent presentation and message.
- Minimal to no effort.
- Fails to present thesis and evidence.
- Demonstrates no understanding of the POV, topic, and research/ historical perspective in both presentation and essay.
- Fails to present arguments in essay and presentation (logos).
- No support in essay and presentation (ethos)
- Essay is unorganized, incomprehensible with inappropriate syntax and vocabulary use.