

Dear Middle School Teacher,

Welcome to this 2006 edition of Learning Enrichment's (LE's) study unit on China! We've updated the content of the original unit, added a full page of guided-reading materials—all of them, from Chinese sources!—and expanded the teaching guide with more resources and tips for putting the unit to work.

Here's what your updated unit includes: (a) three student text pages; (b) an evaluation page, with short-answer and essay questions; (c) an enrichment page, with selected short readings; and (d) this guide. The "a," "b," and "c" pages are all duplicatable and can be found at LE's website:

www.learningenrichment.org

China's rapidly growing economy and booming exports have surely captured our attention—sometimes, to the degree that we overlook China's cultural wealth. But the resilience of its people's millennia-old culture has important lessons to offer the rest of us. Why has China's culture endured for so long? What kinds of traditions and values does it embody? And how is it faring in our high-tech world? With the materials in this unit, LE invites students to begin searching for answers.

We make one request....

Please use the "Feedback" link on LE's home page to tell our editors how well this unit works for you. Your feedback will be appreciated, as LE plans other units of this type.... Thank you!

a **"Culture Contact" Unit.** As you and your colleagues know, "Culture" is the first of 10 thematic curriculum strands recommended by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in its publication "Expectations of Excellence." The study of a society's culture is also a major theme in state curriculums throughout the USA. With that in mind, LE has crafted every student page in "Discovering China!" to help young readers expand their grasp of this important concept. As they read, students will find both direct and indirect clues to the unique qualities of the Chinese culture.

On the surface, Parts One, Two, and Three of the unit unfold the (fictional) story of two young Americans—Amy and John Lee—who visit relatives in China during the summer of 2005. In reality, the three pages are structured around *three basic steps for discovering what makes a culture unique*. The Q-and-A's at the top of each page introduce and explain the three steps.

Thus: On the **"Homeland"** Page, the Lees begin

their journey in modern-day Beijing, where they *study a topographical map* for clues to the early emergence of China's great civilization. On the **"People"** Page, they *observe* (and make journal entries about) *various customs, interests, legends, and pursuits of people* in China today. And on the **"Heritage"** Page, they *report on* and *discuss* their impressions of China's *enduring cultural characteristics* in our changing world. (They also field great questions from classmates!)

The remaining two duplicatibles (the **"Treasure Hunt"** and **"Reading More"** Pages) are intended to help students recall what they've learned about China's culture—and begin a lifetime process of learning more about it.

Curriculum Standards

The five student pages in this unit have been developed around curriculum standards selected from three sources: the NCSS publication "Expectations of Excellence" (EOE); the "National Standards for History" (NSH); and the National Geography Standards, "Geography for Life" (GFL). Each student page is a "stand-alone" product. Each can be machine-copied and distributed in any order you wish. However, LE recommends that the pages be used in the order in which they appear. That's the best way, we believe, to help middle schoolers strengthen their ability to:

- "explain the geographic reasons for the location of the world's first cities...." ("Human Systems," GFL);
- "identify and describe selected ... patterns of change within ... cultures, such as the rise of civilizations...." ("Time, Continuity, and Change," EOE);
- "explain the role of various [geographic] factors in the development of nation-states...." ("Human Systems," GFL);
- "explain and give examples of how language, ... architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture." ("Culture," EOE);
- "analyze connections between globalizing trends in economy ... and culture in the ... [21st century]—and dynamic assertions of traditional cultural identity and distinctiveness." ("Major Global Trends Since World War II," NSH).

Vocabulary

Culture is the key social studies concept in this unit, and readers will find a series of clues to its meaning and applications. Many other terms are defined in context, though you may want to preview the following lists with your class. Note that place names are spelled in the form in which students will find them on most English-language maps and sources.

"Homeland" Page: *archaeologist, civilization, Confucian, construction crane, domesticate, drought, environment, family compound, Internet café, irrigate,*

plateau, vulnerable. Pronunciation aids for students: *Bao* (**Bough, Bow**), *Beijing* (**Bay-jing**), *hutong* (**who-tong**), *Qinghai* (**Ching-high**), *Shanghai* (Shang-**high**), *Yangtze* (**Yong-see**), *yuan* (yoo-**wahn**), *Xi'an* (**She-on**), *Xiexie* (**she-she**).

"People" Page: *astronaut, Buddha, Buddhism, ethnic minority, fossil fuels, hydropower, Mandarin, mosque, solar power, spectacular, Terra Cotta, tidal power, warrior*. Pronunciation aids: *Bai* (**Buy**), *Chongqing* (**Choong-ching**), *Jiangsu* (Gee-**ong-soo**), *Mogao* (**Mo-gow**), *Nanjing* (**Non-jing**), *Ni hao* (**Knee how**), *Qin Shi Huang* (**Chin She Hwong**), *Shaanxi* (**Shon-she**), *tai chi* (**tigh chee**), *taikong* (**tigh-koong**), *Yichang* (**Yee-chong**), *Yunnan* (You-**non**), *Zaijian* (**Dsigh-jen**, "ds" as in "rods"), *Zhongguo* (**Jong-gwo**).

"Heritage" Page: *Communist, construction crew, environmental protection, high-tech, philosopher, socialist, welfare*. Pronunciation aids: *Taklimakan* (**Taw-kluh-muh-kon**), *Xinjiang* (**Shin-gee-ong**).

"Reading" Page: *characteristics, colonials, rectify*. Pronunciation aids: *Qomolangma* (**Cho-mo-long-mah**), *Tsze-ch'an* (**T'see-chon**).

Using the Q-and-A

The Q-and-A at the top of each student page is a pointer to that page's instructional focus. Be sure students understand that they'll find both *direct* and *indirect* clues to the kinds of "culture information" mentioned in the Q-and-A. Then, as students discuss what they've learned, page by page, list their observations on the chalkboard—making plans to review all three pages at the end of the unit.

Page 1/ "Homeland" Overview:

Amy and John are in their uncle's home in Beijing, where they discuss what they've seen in the city, then study a map to learn where and why China's civilization developed so early. The page explains directly how China's geographic features influenced that development. References to the Palace Museum, *hutongs*, the Great Wall, and Confucius are indirect clues to the fact that the country's traditional culture still survives in a modern-day setting.... Important subtopics on this page include:

Archaeologists. Tell students that Uncle Ru may have been a bit conservative when he claimed that artifacts discovered in this region prove that China's civilization is 6,000 years old. Recent findings at the Dadiwan Ruins in southeastern

Gansu could push the date back to 8,000 years ago.... **Mapping China.** Encourage students to follow Bao's guidelines for adding the "China Proper" half-circle to their copy of the map on this page. For a slew of other excellent maps see "Chinese Geography..." at this Columbia University "Asia For Educators" page: <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/china/geog/maps.htm> **China's Rivers.** You may also want students to do additional research on China's current use of—and future plans for—the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers. In *The Future of Life* (excerpted in the February 2002 issue of *Scientific American*), Edward O. Wilson notes that the Yellow River Channel now runs "bone-dry" near its mouth, during part of each year. Share this fact with students, then ask: What can China do, to compensate for the increasing drain (by farms and factories) on the Yellow River's water? Hint: China's Xinhua News Agency has reported on plans for a massive "South-North Water Diversion Project," to bring water from the Yangtze to the north. See this account from their archives: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2004-06/05/content_1509399.htm

Also: The 2008 Olympics Games are still in the future. But, as the host city, Beijing has big plans for a green Olympics. Plans include an "Olympic Green" that sports fans among your students can learn about, using an interactive map of key locations. Select "Venues" at this official Web Site for the Beijing Olympics: <http://en.beijing2008.com/>

Page 2/ "People" Overview: On this page, clues related to the opening Q-and-A are less direct than on the previous page. But, with discussion, students should be able to infer that the Chinese people have a shared pride in their history (the Buddhist statues, the first Qin emperor, Nanjing's survival and success). As for shared goals, the allusions to Shanghai's prosperity, the Three Gorges Dam, the taikonaut—and even the herbal research being done by Bao's college friends—could be taken as clues to China's hopes for the future.... Important subtopics: **China's Provinces.** On Day 5, the Lees fly to Gansu Province, a reference to one of China's administrative units. You may want to have students research Gansu and other provinces. You'll find an interactive provincial map of China (including short histories) at this location: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2003-02/19/content_815536.htm Perhaps,

after previewing the site, you may want to assign individual students to research and report on various provinces. (Reminder: The PRC has claimed Taiwan as a province since 1949.).... **Buddhism.** On the topic of religion, the "Data Page" in LE's online China unit for high school students reports that Confucian teachings influence Chinese cultural values; Taoism and Buddhism are widespread; Christianity is practiced by three to four percent of the people; and Islam is observed by one to two percent. (See LE's Internet address below.)....

Ethnic Minorities. What a large number of ethnic minorities in China (55)! There's a wealth of material to be found on this topic in most standard encyclopedias. See, for example, "People of China" in Microsoft® Encarta® Encyclopedia. Ask students: In the USA, does the popular image of Chinese culture include an awareness of China's ethnic and religious diversity?... **Three Gorges Dam.** China's new Three Gorges Dam, to be completed within a few years, is already in operation and is frequently in the news. Have a team of "reporters" in your class keep track of ongoing news about the Dam. Perhaps they could start a class scrapbook on the topic.

Also: With its successful space flight in October 2005, China has confirmed its role as the world's third "space-age" nation! For a detailed look at its accomplishments and plans, see "The Second Mission" at: <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/fly/143412.htm> Ask students what effect they think China's space program might have on its unique culture: Would success in their space ventures and other modern scientific programs tend to strengthen—or weaken—the influence of China's traditional culture on the lives of its people?

Page 3/ "Heritage" Overview:

Here, the indirect clues to the essence of China's culture arise from the Lees' follow-up report to their classmates—and from their answers to classmates' questions. China is revealed to have a growing, changing economy; it shares problems that other nations face (environmental concerns, the poverty of some of its people). Yet, both Amy and Lee (in different ways) indicate that the Chinese are conscious of their rich heritage and want to preserve it.... Important subtopics: **History recap.** At one point, Mrs. Bonn sums up the dramatic history of China's first four decades after the Empire was overthrown in 1912.

Several important figures in Chinese history lived during those times—Sun Yat-sen and Mao Zedong, in particular. Encourage students to research their influence on 20th-century China....

Democracy? Is modern-day China promoting democracy? Uncle Ru indicates that it is. See also this interesting article on the PRC's own Web Site, "CPC to Promote In-Party Democracy at Grassroots Organizations" at: <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zl/zgrq/t36669.htm> **Riddle answered.** Be sure that students grasp Uncle Ru's use of the riddle when he is questioned about China's form of government. He isn't dodging the question posed by John's Dad. Rather, he suggests that (for him) there may be another, more basic, issue—the preservation of culture. As students react to, and discuss, Ru's observation, help them to think about it within the context of the unit's search to define China's culture. Review their answers to the questions on the previous two pages. Then suggest that they write a short essay under the title: "Two Outstanding Characteristics of the Chinese Culture."

Also: A question by Isa ("Which is the 'real' China?") deals with cultural identity: How does one characterize a society's culture, if it presents apparently contradictory patterns (very wealthy and very poor; very traditional and very liberal; etc.)? What do students think?

Page 4/ "Treasure Hunt!" LE strongly recommends that you use the "Treasure Hunt" Page for an open-book quiz or small-group activity. The "Treasure Hunt" Page demands careful reading and close attention to details. And small-group efforts would facilitate the discussion that some questions are likely to prompt.

Answers: The short-answer questions on this page have been distributed as follows: Items 1-5 deal with the "Heritage" Page; Items 6-10, with the "Homeland" Page; and Items 11-15, with the "People" Page. **PART A:** 1-T; 2-F; 3-O; 4-F; 5-T. **PART B:** 6-b; 7-b; 8-a; 9-c; 10-c; 11-c; 12-b; 13-a; 14-a; 15-a. **PART C:** Answers will vary.

Page 5/ "Reading More." In various ways, the reading selections on this page reflect strong cultural traditions within China. For example: **a-Which Name?** A fascinating subject, and one that can serve as a small "key" to a big issue—namely, the intrusive role played by Western nations in Asian countries (including China) between the 15th and

20th centuries. After discussing the "name" issue, students might want to research the "Opium War" and "unfair treaties" in China's 19th-century history.... **b-Writer's Advice.** This fragment from the thoughts of China's greatest 20th-century author seems unambiguous. But you might want to help students explore what it means to "master" the future.... **c-Confucius.** With this item, the focus is on four human traits held up for admiration. But you may also want to explore student reactions to the term "superior man." (What did the term mean in the age of Confucius—2,500 years ago? How is the term used now?) Invite students to think of modern-day equivalents—for example: an honorable person **d-Mascots.** If your students have access to the Internet in class, they can see the five "Beijing 2008" mascots at: <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2005/Nov/148523.htm> **e-Old Legend.** In today's speed-conscious, high-tech environment, students may feel that the old man in this legend was, indeed, foolish. But remind them about the centuries it took the Chinese people to build the Great Wall. Then challenge them to think of modern-day projects that people undertake, even though there is no foreseeable date of conclusion. (Seeking a cure for cancer might be one example.) How important are "big" goals, in life? Help students to see that a legend is a story through which important principles may be taught....

Answers: a-Which Name? 1. In the 19th century (or, the 1800s). Using the writer's calculations (in 2002), the British named Mt. Everest around 1852. **2.** Qomolangma. **3.** The writer's argument focuses on the issue of which name is older. However, there's also an implied argument that an indigenous name should be given priority. **b-Writer's Advice.** A literal answer would be: ... so that they can "be masters of the future." But a more reflective answer might be: ... to learn from one's experience; or ... to learn not to repeat mistakes. **c-Confucius. 1.** You may want students to repeat the full text of Sentences 2-5. A shorter answer would be: humility, respect (for elders or those in authority), kindness, and justice. **2.** Answers will vary, but each should probably include some indication of the basis for the student's opinion. **d-Mascots. 1.** The 2008 Summer Olympics, to be held in Beijing. **2.** The bird we know as a swallow. **3.** Answers

will vary, though the choices seem to suggest the Chinese people's widespread affection for children and fondness for certain animals. **e-Old Legend. 1.** Families can beget new members through succeeding generations (and perhaps continue the "family business," too!); but mountains cannot reproduce. **2.** Answers will vary, and there's a wide range of possibilities: the importance of respecting the wishes of one's parents, being willing to undertake big tasks, remaining committed to shared goals; etc.

More Sources

Good sources on China abound! Here are a few: The annual "China" entry in the *CIA World Factbook* provides an excellent data profile. Find it at: www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html The authorized government portal site for the PRC offers a wealth of links leading to facts, figures, and features about life in China today. See: <http://www.china.org.cn/english/index.htm> The Lonely Planet's publication on *China* includes fact-packed chapters (with high-interest details) on the history and cultural highlights of each of China's provinces.... And for additional background and tips, see "China: Continuing the Journey," LE's online unit for high school students at: www.learningenrichment.org

Note: In the "Chinese Wisdom" box, the source for the segment of Lu You's poem is *One Hundred Poems From the Chinese*, by Kenneth Rexroth (New York: New Directions, 1971. P108). The "Chinese farmers' " saying is reported in *Popular China*..., edited by Perry Link, et al (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002. P90).

Thanks!

LE wishes to thank the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States for underwriting the costs of this unit's production and distribution. The LE team responsible for this unit's content includes: Project Director, Clayton Westland; Poster and Unit Designer, Stephanie Tevonian; Poster Calligraphy, Xiaoming Haugh; Map Designer, Dave Herring; Editorial Director, Patricia Conniffe. One and all, we truly hope the unit meets your needs! Please let us know how well it works for you.... Take a few minutes to go to the "Feedback" link on LE's home page and send us your comments.

Thank you!