

## Gender and Culture: Symbols and Stories

### Class

9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Expository Reading and Writing

### Standards

1. Reading (Literature) - Key Ideas and Details
  - a. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
2. Writing - Text Types and Purposes
  - a. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

### Guiding Questions

1. What role did women play in Chinese society thousands of years ago?
2. What role do women play in modern Chinese society?
3. What clues can we find in the Mogao Caves and in our readings on the Silk Road to support our ideas on the role of women in the past?

### Introduction

As we continue our journey through China searching for clues to better understand the roles played by women in China past and present, we arrive at a place called Dunhuang, an oasis town at the eastern end of the Silk Road with hundreds of elaborately painted Buddhist caves. Exploring the caves will help us understand the way of life of people who lived in this part of China.

Students will read and carefully annotate two stories from *Life along the Silk Road* by Susan Whitfield, making connections with the previous discussions about gender roles. Then they will share their stories and their findings. As a group we will create a table with the evidence for each role and then discuss how the stories from the book and the artifacts found in the caves depict the roles that women played in ancient Chinese society.

### Objectives

1. Students will annotate and analyze stories of women who lived along the Silk Road and then present their findings to the class.
2. Students will write an expository essay discussing how images and symbols can be used to tell stories. They will critically analyze the Mogao cave paintings in order to discuss the role of women in ancient China.
3. Students will research and make inferences about the role of women in modern-day China.

4. Students will compare and contrast the role of women in China with the role of women in Latin America, giving evidence to support their ideas.
5. Students will create a poster to portray their ideas of what they believe the role of women should be in our society. They will use symbols of their choice and then as a group we will place all the posters together “cave” style. Then they will participate in a gallery walk.

### **Materials**

1. Susan Whitfield, *Along the Silk Road*, 1 copy per student
2. Pictures or postcards of the Mogao Caves, 1 set for teacher to display
3. Examples of symbols that represent a variety of ideas, 1 set for teacher to display
4. 8x11” cardstock, 1 per student
5. Set of colored pencils or markers, 1 per student

### **Equipment**

1. Computer for teacher’s presentation
2. Projector
3. Computers for students to type their essays

### **Time**

Two 110-minute and one 50-minute class periods, plus 2-4 hours of homework

### **Teacher preparation**

1. Frontload vocabulary for general class discussion and for analysis of the stories “The Nun’s Tale” and “The Princess’ Tale”, i.e. grottoes, abbess, nunnery, Buddhist, aesthetic, Dunhuang, zither, cavalry, extortionate, dowry, precarious, insignia, ethnicity
2. Create graphic organizer to compile vocabulary
3. Create graphic organizer to compile examples of women’s roles along with the evidence to substantiate the ideas/symbols
4. Create prompt and grading rubric for expository essay
5. Create rubric for poster and gallery walk

### **Time**

3 class periods

### **Procedures**

Day 1 (110 minutes)

1. Do Now
  - a. Instruct students to write in their journals their response to the following quote: "I have learned that bearing males is bad, but bearing girls is good. If you bear a girl you can marry her to a neighbor, but a boy will end up buried out on the prairie grass." – The Soldier's Tale
  - b. Ask students to think about the meaning of this quote, highlighting unknown words. Give them time to prepare to share their ideas with the class.
  - c. Assign students leadership roles: Note Taker, Moderator, Time Taker, E.S. Helper
  - d. Use "equity sticks" to call on students at random (impartially) to share their notes and ideas.
2. Small Group Reading
  - a. Divide students into small groups of 4-5 students and assign each group either "The Nun's Tale" or "The Princess' Tale"
  - b. Have students read and annotate the stories, looking for evidence of the roles played by each member of society with emphasis on the role of women.
  - c. Pass out the graphic organizer on the roles of women and ask each group to fill in the organizer with the roles and evidence that they found in their story.
  - d. Have students add the new words that they learned from the reading to the vocabulary wall. Each new word entry should include the word's definition and part of speech, as well as an example sentence and illustration
3. Presentation
  - a. Have each group present their story to the class and share their graphic organizers and vocabulary wall entries.
4. Exit Ticket
  - a. Ask students to write a short response to the following prompt: What roles did women play in the stories we read in class today? Give evidence for your ideas.

## Day 2 (50 minutes)

1. Do Now
  - a. Instruct students to write a response in their journal to the following question: What is a symbol, and how it is used to express ideas or beliefs?
  - b. Think – Pair – Share
  - c. Lead a group discussion of the students' responses to this prompt
2. Small Group Visual Analysis
  - a. Divide students into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a picture from one of the Mogao caves (Cave 45 or 245).
  - b. Ask students to look carefully at the paintings. Within their groups, have students write down symbols that they find within the

paintings and describe what each symbol represents. Students must give evidence to support their claims.

- c. Have each group present their findings to the class.
3. Exit Ticket
    - a. Ask students to write a short response to the following question:  
How can the interpretation of a symbol change your perspective of a culture/society?

### Day 3 (110 minutes)

1. Do Now
  - a. Ask students to write a response in their journals to the following question: What is a symbol? If you had to choose a symbol to represent you, what would it be and why?
  - b. Assign students leadership roles: Note Taker, Moderator, Time Taker, E.S. Helper
  - c. Use “equity sticks” to call on students at random (impartially) to share their notes and ideas.
2. Comparing and Contrasting Ideas/Symbols
  - a. Provide each student with a printout of a variety of different images. Have each student choose one to talk about.
  - b. Use Think-Pair-Share to have students explain their choice to their partner.
  - c. Lead the class in coming up with the definition of a symbol as a group.
3. Researching Similar Symbols in Latin America
  - a. Divide students into small groups of 3-4. Ask each group to research recognizable Latin American symbols.
  - b. Have each group present their findings to the whole class.
4. Creating New Symbols
  - a. Pass out 8.5x11” cardstock paper and coloring sets to the students.
  - b. Ask students to design their own symbol and draw it on the cardstock. Students can use whatever media they believe will suit their symbol best – collage, paint, colored pencils, etc.
  - c. Have students write a description of their symbol explaining the meaning behind it.
5. After Lesson Activities
  - a. Students will create their own cave using symbols/painting to express their stories and their stories will become the paintings on the walls.
  - b. Students will invite their families to tell them stories so they can create their paintings for the cave.
  - c. Essay writing
  - d. Student revisions
  - e. Final copy

### Assessment

1. Students will share their essay and their paintings
2. Based on rubrics, teacher will assess final work.
3. Student will publish work as part of the “cave”

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Score \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Exceeds Standards 4</b>	<b>Meets Standards 3</b>	<b>Nearly Meets Standards 2</b>	<b>Below Standards 1</b>
<b>Establishes a context and thesis</b>	<p>Skillfully selects and summarizes key ideas to introduce the topic.</p> <p>Establishes a clear, insightful thesis when responding to a prompt.</p>	<p>Selects and summarizes key ideas to introduce the topic.</p> <p>Establishes a clear thesis when responding to a prompt.</p>	<p>Attempts to select and summarize key ideas to introduce the topic.</p> <p>Thesis is too general or unclear or does not respond to the prompt.</p>	<p>Does not select and summarize key ideas to introduce the topic.</p> <p>No identifiable thesis.</p>
<b>Supporting Information /Evidence</b>	<p>Includes significant facts and details relevant to the thesis.</p> <p>Excludes extraneous information.</p>	<p>Includes facts and details relevant to the thesis.</p> <p>Excludes extraneous information.</p>	<p>Includes some facts and details that may or may not be relevant.</p>	<p>No details or details are completely irrelevant.</p>
<b>Organization</b>	<p>Highly developed introduction that sets forth the purpose of the paper and effectively hooks the reader.</p> <p>Purposeful transitions used to connect ideas logically.</p> <p>Information is presented in an effective, logical order.</p>	<p>Clear introduction that sets forth the purpose of the paper.</p> <p>Transitions used to connect ideas.</p> <p>Presents information in a logical order.</p> <p>Conclusion ties all ideas</p>	<p>Weak introduction.</p> <p>Some attempt at using transitions.</p> <p>Attempts to present information in a logical order</p> <p>Conclusion may not reflect</p>	<p>Introduction not developed.</p> <p>Little or no attempt to connect ideas.</p> <p>Information not in a logical order.</p> <p>Paper may lack a conclusion.</p>

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# Gender and Culture

## Mogao Caves

By

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9 -12 Grade English ERWC ACFCRHS



# Lesson Overview

- 3 periods: 1 periods of 50 minutes and 2 periods of 110 minutes
- Expository Reading and Writing
- Unit “Cultural Awareness Around the World”
- Lesson: Asia - China





# Objectives

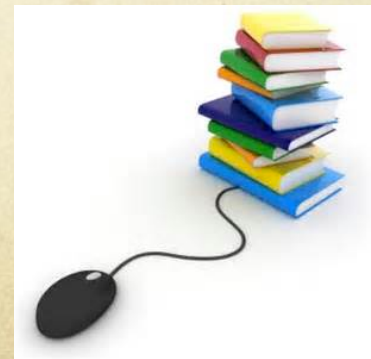


- Students will **analyze** and **annotate** different stories from a book and then share their findings.
- Students will **write** an expository essay discussing how images/paintings/symbols can be used to portray stories. Using the Mogao Caves' paintings to discuss the roles played by women in China in the antiquity.
- Students will **research** and make inferences about the roles played by women in present time China.
- Students will **compare and contrast** the female roles of women in China and the symbols that represent them, with the roles of women in Latin America giving evidence to support their ideas.
- Students will **create** a poster to portray their ideas of what should be the role of females in our society or a story shared by their family. They will use symbols of their choice and then as a group we will place all the posters together "cave" style. Then they will participate in a gallery walk.



# Resources and Materials

- Copies of Susan Whitfield *Along the Silk Road*
- Pictures or postcards of the Mogao Caves
- Examples of symbols that represent a variety of ideas
- Poster paper, coloring pens, etc.
- Computers to do research and type their essays
- Handouts with graphic organizers

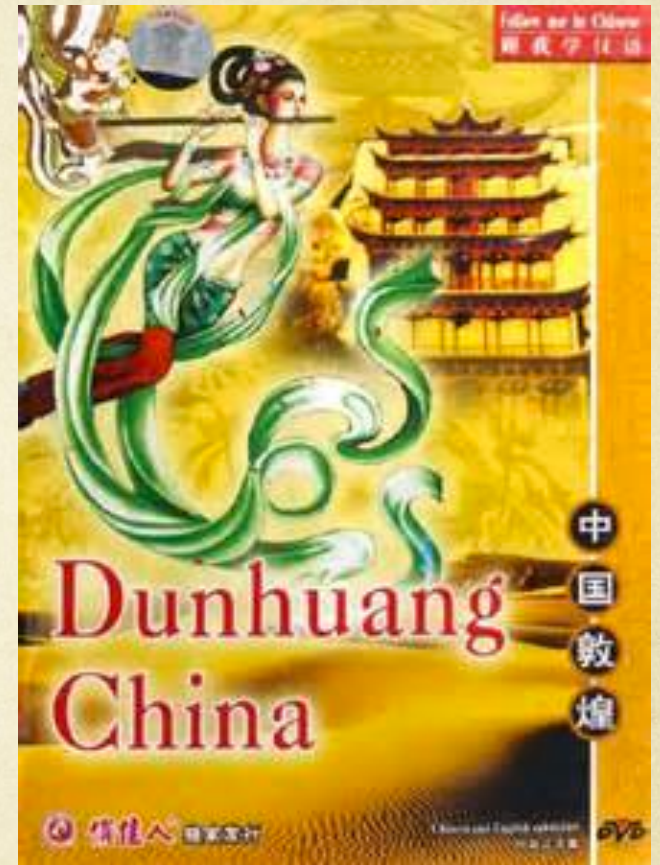


# Standards

- **Reading Key Ideas and Details**
- *Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.*
- **Writing Standards Text Types and Purposes**
- *Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.*

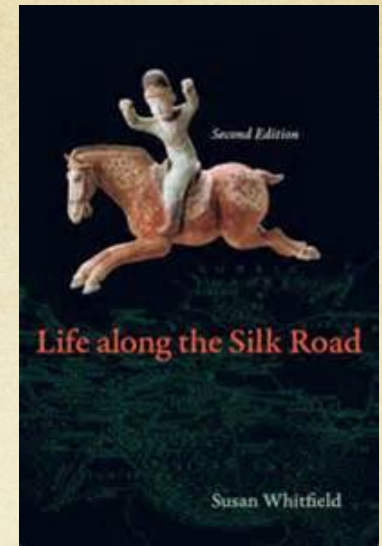


# Sample Lesson





# Do Now



- “I have learned that bearing males is bad, but bearing girls is good. If you bear a girl you can marry her to a neighbor, but a boy will end up buried out on the prairie grass.” – The Soldier’s Tale
- Use your journal to copy the quote and think about the meaning of this quote, highlight unknown words and prepare to share your ideas with the class. Remember there is not right or wrong answer. As long as you have logical support for your claims.



# Let's Share

- Secretary: Takes notes of the most important information. # 1
- Moderator: Keeps the audience in order and calls the names of the participants. # 2
- Time taker. Keeps tabs on the time for discussion. # 3



# First Reading

- Groups 1 and 2 “The Princess’ Tale”
- Groups 3 and 4 “The Nun’s Tale”
- Use Graphic Organizer to guide your reading. You will be looking for the following

Unknown Words	Characters	Main Ideas



# Present your story

- Summary of the story: Basic plot
- Vocabulary:
- Characters:
- 5 minutes per group.





# E. T.

- What are the roles of the females in the stories? Give evidence from the story to support your response.



# Next Lessons

- Vocabulary Development
- Second Reading of the stories for analysis
- Introduction to the concept of visual representation.  
(Symbols used to tell stories)
- Visual Analysis of the Mogao Caves paintings and sculptures
- Researching for symbols that present stories, represent cultural traits in America (North and South)



# Next Steps

- Introduce the concepts of Buddhism and Sutras
- Comparing and Contrasting Symbols used for story telling at the Mogao Caves and the ones used for story telling in America
- Creating their own painting using symbols to tell their own stories from home.
- Group creates its own cave and does a gallery walk
- Students write an essay comparing and contrasting the use of symbols in both the Mogao Caves and their own western country.

# Final Assessment

- Students write an expository essay discussing the roles played by females in the Silk Road and the symbols that represent those roles. Students will use the stories from the book and the paintings in the caves to support their main idea.

