

**Tang Poets and Western China**

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**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Medieval World History  
Chinese History Unit**

**California State Standards 7.3-**Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of China in the Middle Ages.

4. Understand the importance of both overland trade and maritime expeditions between China and other civilizations in the Mongol Ascendancy and Ming Dynasty.

**Reading Standards for Social Studies Standards-**

5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g. sequentially, comparatively, casually).

6. Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g. loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

**Essential Question:**

How are the experiences of people during the Tang Dynasty the same or different than ours?

How are symbols similar across cultures?

How is fear or paranoia expressed in art?

**Introduction:**

The lesson takes place after students have studied the history of Rome, and the rise of Islam, then the unit on China begins. Furthermore, for students to have a better understanding of the trade routes that connected civilizations and people throughout time an emphasis will be made, at the beginning of the semester, on terms such as; place, region, interaction, location, culture, cultural diffusion, trade, trade routes, religions, ideas, movement and communication.

The lesson will take place after students have looked through and read from the textbook *History Alive!: The Medieval World and Beyond*, pages 176 thru 213. During this time the teacher will have already covered major dynasties of China, and more specifically on the Tang Dynasty. As an introduction to the unit I will give students a presentation of my travels through China during this past summer, which will help them become familiar with the different panel frescoes that may be found in the Tang Dynasty imperial tombs, the Dunhuang Grottos and Tang Dynasty tomb of a high official in Dunhuang. Personal photographs taken during the trip will be included to give examples of the diversity of the area.

At this point students will be familiar with secondary source material that gives background information on the Tang Dynasty and the cultural impact that the Silk Road had in China and its western regions and the kingdoms (Central Asia, India, Persia and Afghanistan) it interacted with during that time. Students will be required to do a textual analysis of one literary source written by Li Bai- a poet that lived during the Tang Dynasty. A graphic organizer will be passed out that will scaffold the activity to students. Students will have to write in their own words what they think the poem is about, they will have to cite two pieces of textual information/evidence that shows how people lived or tells the reader what places in China might the author have been talking about. They will be using their notebooks as a

source and a support in completing the lesson. The graphic organizer will also include a section where students are able to write a short summary/reflection about what they think the text is talking about.

The goal of the lesson is to provide students with primary source material, in this case, one piece of poetry that describes the lives of people and the sacrifices they made to enable the Tang Dynasty to flourish militarily and culturally in its expansion and control of its western regions. Students will be reading one poem by Li Bai. Aside from the document analysis, students will be required to write a short poem or passage of what the author would write about today, being that most of my students have family members and or they have recently migrated to the US and live in communities that are marginalized and prone to violence.

**Objectives:**

- Analyze at least two literary pieces that talk about life during the Tang Dynasty.
- Appreciate the different aspects of life during the Tang Dynasty.
- Learn how common people might have been affected by war and military service in the western frontiers.
- Use a graphic organizer and identify pieces of evidence that tells the reader how life was for common folk.
- Make a connection between the past and the present, by writing their own poem that describes the life of people today.

**Materials:**

Textbook- *History Alive! The Medieval World and Beyond*

Pencils

Copies of Li Bai's poem *Fighting South of the Ramparts*

erasers

writing rubric

map of China

One copy of Li Bai's poem, *Fighting South of the Ramparts* per student

Every student should have their own notebook

One graphic organizer per student

**Equipment:**

white board

dry erase markers

white board eraser

projector

computer

speakers

internet

Elmo

**Focus Lesson: Tang Poets and Western China**

The teacher will have already made copies of the graphic organizer containing guiding questions for the document analysis.

The teacher will have already posted the day's agenda on the front of the room.

The teacher will have a warm up ready so that when students enter the classroom, they are on task and engaged, they will have 5-10 minutes to write their response on their notebooks, and then will be randomly called on to share.

The teacher will have already modeled to the students the expectations of the activity in which they will be engaging in.

The teacher will turn on his computer, projector and Elmo to project a sample document to analyze by talking to the text, using the graphic organizer, and following the guiding questions.

Students will be given a chance to work in groups to analyze another part of a sample document to facilitate understanding of the expectations.

Students will be given a copy of the poem that they will analyze along with the graphic organizer handout.

Students will be provided with a short biography of Li Bai so that they maybe have background information on both poets.

### **Time- Lesson implementation**

Two Day lesson, 55 minutes each day:

Day one:

5-10 minutes: Warm up-What are some reasons why people move to a new place?

All-Write-Round-Robin- in groups of four students answer the question, with each student writing one sentence and writing their initial on the side indicating which sentence they wrote.

Students are given time to think about the question, and to discuss it with their groups.

Students are randomly called out to share what their group wrote.

2-5-minute review the agenda for the day, and introduction to the lesson.

Hook: How would you feel if you were forced to move or forced into the military to go fight in a faraway place?

A short-guided discussion will take place, and the teacher introduces the day's lesson.

Today we will look at a poet and how he described life during the Tang Dynasty.

5-10 minutes: Teacher models what will be done and expected.

You will analyze a poem, choose two lines that you feel you understand and are able to explain.

You will write down those two lines on your graphic organizer, and you will explain each line.

Before you work on the piece independently, we will read it together and break it down.

5-10 minutes guided practice: The teacher reads the poem to the class twice. The teacher will randomly call on students to read a line from the poem. The teacher will go through the poem one more time highlighting words that might be difficult or that students do not understand.

5-10 minutes group practice: Working in their groups students will analyze together and find one piece of textual evidence that they feel is important.

10 minutes- Wrap up: have a series of questions of information that students discovered while doing the text analysis.

### **Day two:**

5-10 minutes- Warm up: Why do some empires go to war?

Students will be given time to answer the question. A minimum of five sentences in their response. The teacher will call out on a number of students to share their answer.

2-5- minutes- Review the days agenda and review what was studied the previous day.

Hook: Have you ever moved to a new place? How did it feel? Are there places that people don't want to move to today?

Document analysis and remind students what the expectations are.

5-7 minutes- Review yesterday's work and retell students of the guidelines for the activity. Students will receive a copy of Li Bai's *Fighting South of the Ramparts* and the graphic organizer that goes with the poem.

10-15 minutes- Pass out poem that students will be required to read. Students will also pass out the graphic organizer that will contain guiding questions.

Students will be required to annotate parts of the text and to talk to the text if necessary.

13 minutes- Students will begin to fill out the graphic organizer.

Once they have filled in the necessary boxes they will write a one paragraph reflection on the pieces of textual evidence that they chose, citing them on their reflection as well.

If there are students that are done before everyone else, they will have to write their own poem.

2-5 minutes- Wrap up: Collect all graphic organizers and have a quick review with students. Questions to ask, what part of China do you think this takes place? Why? Use evidence from the text to prove your answer.

### **Assessment**

Lesson assessment for the lesson will be the document analysis. They will have had completed the graphic organizer, which may be collected or checked off. Completion of this assignment is also a preparation for an end of the semester presentation where students will write an essay or give a short presentation to the class using all the resources available to them in their notebook.

### ***Fighting South of the Ramparts***

By Li Bai (701- 744 CE)

Last year we were fighting at the source of the Sang-kan;  
This year we are fighting on the Onion River road.  
We have washed our swords in the surf of Parthian seas;  
We have pastured our horses among the snows of the Tien Shan.  
The King's armies have grown grey and old  
Fighting ten thousand leagues away from home.  
The Huns have no trade but battle and carnage;  
They have no field or ploughlands,  
But only wastes where white bones lie among yellow sands.  
Where the house of Ch'in built the Great Wall that was to keep away the Tartars,  
There, in its turn, the House of the Han lit beacons of war.  
The beacons are always alight, fighting and marching never stop.  
Men die in the field, slashing sword and sword;  
The horses of the conquered neigh piteously to Heaven.  
Crows and hawks peck for human guts,  
Carry them in their beaks and hang them on the branches of withered trees.  
Captains and soldiers are smeared on the bushes and grass;  
The generals schemed in vain.  
Know therefore that the sword is a cursed thing  
Which the wise man uses only if he must.

**Period:**

**Graphic Organizer: Document Analysis**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade World History- China**

**Inference:** An inference is your answer to a question; its an observation, based on the text you read.

**Citation:** A citation is a quotation or reference to the text, on which you base your assertion. In can be written in your own words (paraphrase) or it can be the author’s exact words (quotation).

**Directions:** Make an observation about the text you read. Support your observation with the examples from the poem. Clear evidence includes a quotation and/or paraphrase and an explanation of the evidence in your own words. Finally, write a short summary of your idea or evidence.

**Observation:**

Citation (quotation or paraphrase from the text):	Explanation: In your own words, explain why this citation supports your observation:
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**Summary** (You may use the sentence starters to write the summary):

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ” shows that the author thinks that \_\_\_\_\_ . This means

that \_\_\_\_\_ . This means that \_\_\_\_\_ . This proves that people

during the Tang Dynasty were \_\_\_\_\_ , because its states that

“ \_\_\_\_\_ .”

# Tang Poets and Western China: Poem Analysis

Incorporating Literature in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade World History – Mr. Ortiz

## Parts of the lesson

- Warm up: Think-Pair-Share-Reflective question.
- Introduction to Lesson.
- Read together as a class.
- Written response- using textual evidence.
- Wrap up



## Team Building: Think-Pair-Share

- Read the warm up question.
- Think about it for about a moment.
- Share your response with your elbow partner.



Do you have a favorite poem, song, story or author? What is it about? Why do you like it?

Do poems or stories help us better understand history? What do you think?



## Today you will be reading a poem from the Tang Dynasty.

### Modeling

- Group practice
- Independent practice

### Action

- The teacher will model to the students what they will be expected to do. By reading the poem to the class and finding a passage, writing on the graphic organizer, and explaining the passage.
- Again, the teacher will read the poem, then will give students the task of finding a passage that identifies or sets the mood.
- Working in pairs students will find a passage and explain it in their own words.

## Fighting South of the Ramparts by Li Bai

- Last year we were fighting at the source of the Sang-kan;
- This year we are fighting on the Onion River road.
- We have washed our swords in the surf of Parthian seas;
- We have pastured our horses among the snows of the Tian Shan.
- The King's armies have grown grey and old
- Fighting ten thousand leagues away from home.
- The Huns have no trade but battle and carnage;
- They have no field or ploughlands,
- But only wastes where white bones lie among yellow sands.
- Where the house of Ch'in built the Great Wall that was to keep away the Tartars,



## Continued

- There, in its turn, the House of the Han lit beacons of war.
- The beacons are always alight, fighting and marching never stop.
- Men die in the field, slashing sword and sword;
- The horses of the conquered neigh piteously to Heaven.
- Crows and hawks peck for human guts,
- Carry them in their beaks and hang them on the branches of withered trees.
- Captains and soldiers are smeared on the bushes and grass;
- The generals schemed in vain.
- Know therefore that the sword is a cursed thing
- Which the wise man uses only if he must.

## Assessment: This lesson culminates with one paragraph reflection on the poem.

### Expectation

- Students will be required to use at least one piece of textual evidence.
- Students will write at least four sentences in their explanation.

### Purpose

- Basis for using a claim and analysis evidence.
- To prepare students for an expository essay or presentation at the end of the semester.

## Directions:

- Make an observation about the text you read.
- Support your observation with examples from the poem.
- Clear evidence includes a quotation and/or paraphrase and an explanation of the evidence in your own words.
- Example:  
" \_\_\_\_\_ " shows that the author thinks that \_\_\_\_\_. This means that \_\_\_\_\_. This proves that some people during the Tang Dynasty were \_\_\_\_\_.
- You will have two to three minutes to write your response. If done early try to write your own poem using similar imagery or words.

**Time is Up! We are done!**

Thank you for participating, and cooperating. Have a good day!

