Ancient China Unit

Content-based Instruction Unit for ELLs
Lisa A. Sperrazza
Content Based Instruction
FLA 518 Verplaetse
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Introduction
This unit was created and adapted for use in a mainstream third grade classroom that includes ELLs of varying levels. The lessons that are attached are not by any means a complete unit, however they are sequenced in a meaningful way. My third grade curriculum begins the year with an introduction to the solar system, which leads to the planet Earth, which leads to landform studies, which leads to the history of civilization, which is where this unit comes in.
# ANCIENT CHINA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals:</th>
<th>ESL Language</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To use English for social and academic communication.</td>
<td>To improve students' oral and written academic language.</td>
<td>To describe and compare common features of societies.</td>
<td>To develop students' means of gaining information/understanding.</td>
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</table>

## Learning Objectives:

### Awareness and Attitude: Students will be aware of an appreciate...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge: Students will know...</th>
<th>Vocabulary related to maps and geography: direction words, key, mountains, rivers, oceans, seas, deserts.</th>
<th>Vocabulary related to maps and geography: mountains, river, ocean, sea, desert, direction words, key.</th>
<th>--Where China is located on a map. --Physical features visible on maps.</th>
<th>Compare locations on a world map.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where students' country of origin is in relation to China.</td>
<td>Comparison words including: same, similar, alike, in common.</td>
<td>--All peoples have used tools to help them meet their basic needs.</td>
<td>Identify physical features on a map.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary relating to Ancient China.</td>
<td>The language used to make comparisons.</td>
<td>--Many of our present day ideas in art, science, government and other areas have roots in ancient civilizations such as China.</td>
<td>Use of a Venn Diagram for comparing/contrasting.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary relating to Ancient China.</td>
<td></td>
<td>--We can learn about ancient societies through studying the remains they left behind.</td>
<td>Extracting information from text.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>--All peoples have used some form of language as a means of communication.</td>
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<td>Skills: Students should be able to...</td>
<td>Identify new vocabulary through completing a word match.</td>
<td>Identify and explain new vocabulary.</td>
<td>--Discuss similarities between ancient China and present day American society.</td>
<td>Use a Venn Diagram.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write a paragraph comparing present day American society with ancient China (in native language if necessary.)</td>
<td>Write a paragraph comparing present day American society with ancient China.</td>
<td>--Name specific items pertaining to ancient China's way of life.</td>
<td>--Utilize a map to gather information about particular geographic locations.</td>
<td>Read age appropriate text to locate information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use information gathered in charts and graphic organizers to write a paragraph.</td>
<td></td>
<td>--Refer to class notes to recall information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOTIONS</td>
<td>FUNCTIONS</td>
<td>FORMULAS</td>
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<td><strong>PRE-LITERACY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Pointing to map items</td>
<td>This is</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>country</td>
<td>Locating China, rivers on a map</td>
<td>China is (a)</td>
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<td>far, close</td>
<td>Identifying old inventions and new inventions</td>
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<td>river</td>
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<td>map</td>
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<tr>
<td>mountain</td>
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<td>desert</td>
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<td>old, new</td>
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<td>now</td>
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<td><strong>BEGINNER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Locating landforms on a map</td>
<td>This is a</td>
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<tr>
<td>equator</td>
<td>(using picture cards, map, or book)</td>
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<td>plateau</td>
<td>Locating the equator and the capital of China on a map.</td>
<td>A (desert) is</td>
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<tr>
<td>capital</td>
<td>Ask/Answer questions using map cards.</td>
<td>A mountain is</td>
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<td>north</td>
<td>Describing landforms and location/direction</td>
<td>The mountains are in</td>
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<tr>
<td>south</td>
<td>Giving map directions</td>
<td>The capital is in</td>
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<tr>
<td>east</td>
<td>Identifying landforms</td>
<td>What is the capital of China?/ It is</td>
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<td>west</td>
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<td>directions</td>
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<td>tall</td>
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<td>dry</td>
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<td>flat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>INTERMEDIATE</strong></td>
<td>Explain inventions</td>
<td>A (compass) is used to</td>
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<td>ancient artifacts</td>
<td>Discuss uses of inventions</td>
<td>I think these things would belong to</td>
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<tr>
<td>archeology</td>
<td>Make predictions based on artifact collections</td>
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<td>archeologists</td>
<td>Use Chinese characters to write a story</td>
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<tr>
<td>inventions</td>
<td>Share ideas with small group</td>
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<td>fireworks</td>
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<td>rockets</td>
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<tr>
<td>wheelbarrows</td>
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<td>paper</td>
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<td>compass</td>
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<td>clock</td>
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<td>medicine</td>
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<td>Chinese characters</td>
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<tr>
<td>recent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ADVANCED</strong></td>
<td>Explain artifact collection giving reason for thinking.</td>
<td>I think these would belong to</td>
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<tr>
<td>drawing conclusions</td>
<td>Compare ancient China with recent times.</td>
<td>because</td>
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<td>civilizations</td>
<td>Write about how inventions have made life easier.</td>
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<td>comparing progress</td>
<td>Comparing two locations on a map.</td>
<td>The Huang He River is</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of the Yangtze.</td>
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Lesson 1
Lesson Plan #1
China Unit

Objectives: To access prior knowledge of China.
To establish an initial understanding of China as a country.
To introduce the geography terms: map, country, river, desert, plateau,
mountain, capital.

Materials: China graphic organizer, world map, an assortment of books about China,
China: the land by Bobbie Kalman, illustrations of rivers, deserts, plateaus, and
mountains.

Task 1: (Groups of 4-5 students) Teacher distributes one “China” graphic organizer to
each group and students collaboratively brainstorm what they already know about China
and record their thoughts on the paper using one color marker. After a few minutes, the
teacher brings the class together and compiles a class web of each of the groups’ ideas.

Task 2: (Groups of 4-5 students) The teacher then distributes illustrated books about
China to each group. The students browse the books and discuss what they can
determine what the class will be learning about based upon the content in the books. This
new information/predictions can be recorded onto the graphic organizer using a different
color marker. Again, the group comes together and shares some of their predictions as
well as reasons for believing so. In defending predictions, students will be encouraged to
refer to illustration from the book in their explanations.

Task 3: (Whole class) Using a large classroom world map, students will be asked to
find out where China can be found. The terms country, continent, Asia, equator, north,
south, east, and west can be reviewed briefly at this time (but have hopefully been
previously taught).

Task 4: (Whole class) Using the book, China: the land, the teacher will read
(paraphrasing as needed) pages 4-7 which involve the variations of landforms and
geography of the country. There are also beautiful illustrations as examples. While
reading, the teacher should record the following vocabulary words on chart paper with a
small icon that conveys meaning: mountains, plateau, desert, and river. Students will
then be given the opportunity to illustrate each of their new vocabulary words (worksheet
attached). The teacher should use sticky notes to label and bookmark these landforms in
the China books or other geography books for student reference for this activity. Or, if
time allows, have students work in their groups to label and bookmark the landforms.

Closure: Students write in their journals briefly about landforms of China.
China

Other things about China

PEOPLE in China

PLACES in China
Lesson 2
Lesson Plan #2
China Unit

Objectives: To reinforce new vocabulary: map, country, river, desert, plateau, mountain, capital.
To use a map to locate important geographic features.
To develop basic map skills.
To encourage oral language through questioning and answering.

Materials: “Discovering China” map worksheet, China map cards, scissors, glue, markers (not necessary, but more fun), large map of China, chart paper.

Task 1: Teacher prompts a brief review of previous lesson by asking students to share their journal writing with their groups. The “Discovering China” map worksheet is distributed to students. The directions are modeled for the class and the students are told to work in teams to complete the page. A color chart is posted which exemplifies the color word written in the actual color. As students are completing the page, the teacher is taking an assessment by asking students to use the map to point to rivers, deserts, mountains, and the capital.

Task 2: As students complete their maps, they partner up to develop their own map quiz cards. They must use their maps to select the correct answer card and glue the answer to the back of the question. Upon completion of matching, partners can quiz each other about the map using their cards, or even make up some of their own questions. Directions for this activity are given either individually (for those who finish up their maps quickly) or to the group, when students begin finishing their maps. Groups should have partners pre-selected to ensure that ELLs are paired with native speakers. If time allows, students should record at least two of the questions that they made up for use in an eventual class-wide China map game.

Task 3/Closure: Using a large map of China, students are invited to point out their geographical findings: Where is the Huang He River? Where is the Yangtze River? Where is the capital? Where is the Taklimakan Desert? Where is Mt. Everest? Etc…The students are then asked where they think most people might live in China and why they think so. They should discuss their ideas with their partners. Students ideas are shared orally and recorded on chart paper. The students are told that they will find out the true answer tomorrow.
Discovering China

1. Trace China's rivers as follows:
   Huang He - yellow
   Yangtze River - blue
   Xi Jiang River - green
   Zhu Jiang (Pearl) - orange
   Amur River - black

2. Color China's deserts brown.
3. Underline China's capital in red.
4. Circle China's highest mountain in purple.
China Map Cards

What is China's longest river?  What is the capital of China?

What is the name of the island in the south that is part of China?  On what continent is China located?

What large eastern city is on the sea?  In what mountains is Mt. Everest located?

What are two deserts found in China?
China Map Cards

Beijing

Yangtze

Asia

Hainan Island

the Himalayas

Shanghai

the Taklimakan and Gobi
Lesson 3
Lesson Plan #3
China Unit

Objectives: To introduce the concept of Ancient Civilizations using a time line to demonstrate “long, long ago.”
To motivate student thought about ancient Chinese arts and inventions.
To facilitate written and oral academic language.

Materials: Growing Up in Ancient China by Ken Teague, chart paper/time line, pictures of 20th century inventions, realia box including items such as a telephone, a remote control, a camera, video games, books, paper, pencils, calculator, wheel, pottery, statue, something bronze, something silk, etc.

Task 1: Review yesterday’s chart of predictions of where students thought most people would want to live in China. Have students listen carefully as you read, “Who Were the Ancient Chinese?” from the book Growing Up in Ancient China by Ken Teague, to learn where ancient Chinese civilization began. Discuss why people would want to live near the rivers, as the book explained.

On chart paper, draw a time line which shows a point representing the current year, labeled “today” at one end, and a point on the other end labeled “ancient times” and “long, long ago” (explaining that these two terms are similar). You may want to write the years by the thousands to give perspective from 2000AD backwards to 5000BC. This time line will be referred to frequently throughout the Unit and can be used to chart important events and human progress milestones (i.e. The Great Wall). If it appears that students are understanding the time line, you can take it back even further, using approximations, to plot about when the Earth was formed (this relates to previous units of study). Icons on the time line are a great way to keep track of milestones/important events. On the class time line, you may want to put a picture of a car, a telephone, and/or other inventions which were invented during the 20th century to demonstrate that even though we think of cars as having been around for awhile, in relation to ancient civilizations, these are almost like “brand-new” inventions.

Teacher takes out realia box. One by one, she shows items to students. As a class they can decide which items were probably around in ancient China (thumbs up) and which items were probably or definitely not around in ancient China (thumbs down).

In groups, have students make a list of inventions that were not available in ancient times. Groups share ideas and the teacher compiles a reference page of these inventions (drawing visual icons as much as possible). Students will then be prompted to write independently about what life would be like without all of these inventions. For beginning language learners and limited literacy students, they may write in their native language, or be prompted to verbalize what they can while the teacher records. Non-verbal prompts might include a thumbs up (yes), thumbs down (no) assessment of what inventions there were in “ancient times.” (Teacher points to icon, student signs whether or not such an invention was in ancient China.)

Closure: Invite students to share their writing with the class. Tomorrow they will be learning about the kinds of inventions that were developed by the ancient Chinese.
Lesson 4
Lesson #4
China Unit

Objectives: To explore ancient Chinese inventions.
To compare ancient tools with tools of today.
To introduce the idea of written language as a tool of communication.

Materials: Pictures or realia exemplifying the wheelbarrow, fireworks and rockets,
clocks, compasses, medicine, and paper; Chinese Character reference page, script for
paragraph writing, Ancient China (book) by Nicholson and Watts.

Share pictures and realia with the class and discuss how each of these “tools” is used
today. Prompt them to talk in small groups about what these objects might have to do
with the study of China. Allow time for students to share ideas and record their thoughts
on the board.

Read pages 14-16 aloud to the class from Nicholson and Watts’ Ancient China book.
To ensure the students have an understanding what each tool is used for, make a chart
showing what each tool can be used for and how that tool made life easier for the ancient
Chinese peoples. Keeping this chart easily visible for reference, have students work in
groups developing a paragraph about how life would be different without one of these
inventions. Each group should have a different invention. Depending on the language
levels, you may want to use one of the following scripts for more guided writing:

If there were no clocks in the world, life would be very different.
You could not _____________________.
You could not _____________________.
You could not _____________________.

Imagine you live in a world with no clocks. What do you do different?
I cannot _____________________.
I cannot _____________________.

There are no _____________________.
There are no _____________________.

Allow time for students to share their “paragraphs” (which can be written on posters)
with the class so that all students could hear what the other groups came up with. This
also encourages oral language practice.

Extension: Bring the group together again with a focus on the invention of paper and
discuss why paper was such an important invention. (It was a cheap writing material, and
easier and quicker to write on than anything people used before.) Introduce the word
“character” and explain/demonstrate that Chinese characters are similar to our alphabet;
that characters are almost like “pictures of words.” In English, we put lots of letters
together to make one word, but in Chinese, one word looks like one picture or character.
(Now would be the perfect time for students to share their “alphabet” or written language
with the class if it is other than English.)
Allow students the opportunity to experiment with writing Chinese characters after modeling a few on the board. Some students may want to “write a story” using the Chinese characters page (attached). The characters should also be posted with an icon that demonstrates meaning. Such an opportunity can bring the entire class of students onto the same page in experimenting with another language/means of communication.
sun  moon  vehicle  horse
man  heart  tree  eyes
fish  mouth  dog  hand
go  field  see  stream
return  father  make  walk
Lesson 5
Lesson #5  
China Unit

Objectives: To introduce new vocabulary: archeologist, artifacts  
To introduce archeology as a means of learning about ancient civilization.  
To compare ancient Chinese inventions with recent inventions.

Materials: Realia/Artifact boxes (see second paragraph below), Ancient China by Nicholson and Watts.

Introduce the lesson by telling the class they are going to be archeologists, people who study how people lived long ago by searching for artifacts, or tools that these people used. (A full understanding of these terms is not necessary just yet.)

Each group will be given a box labeled “Artifacts.” Inside each box will be tools that students can use to “learn about” what kind of person might the tools/artifacts belong to. One box may contain items like pencils, erasers, a ruler, notebook, book bag, video games, etc. Another box could contain a small shovel, flowerpot, watering can, seeds, visor/hat, work-gloves, etc. All the items in the boxes do not all need to be related because the important part of this lesson is that the students are able to “draw conclusions” about what the owners of these tools might be like. After being given time to explore and discuss their Artifacts, students will take turns sharing their “findings” with the class.

After student “archeologists” share their findings with the class, read page 30 in Ancient China to the class and then prompt students to think about what kinds of artifacts might the archeologists in China have found that have helped us understand what we now know about ancient China. If students have difficulty making connections to this, be specific and ask about inventions they are familiar with... “We learned that there were wheelbarrows in ancient China. How do you think archeologists learned this?” (They found one, they found a wheel, the handles, the bed of a wheelbarrow...)

In groups again, have students compile a list of “artifacts” that scientists a long time from now will be able to find that will tell about how we live. For example, they might find things like in ancient China such as a wheelbarrow or clock, but now we want to focus on things that we use now that was NOT available during ancient times. (Refer back to the class timeline with pictures of recent inventions.) This activity will encourage students to start focusing on how our civilization today is different from long ago. It would be ideal to turn this part of the lesson into an actual “time capsule” type of project which could actually be buried on the school grounds to be dug up many years from now.