

NCTA Action Plan

**21st Century Academy
2008-2009 Academic Year**

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21st Century Academy is a K-12 school enrolling approximately 650 students. The school is a Title I school as well as an EFG (Environment, Future, and Global) grant magnet (charter theme school) school in the Hamilton County Department of Education's jurisdiction. Due to the school's EFG grant all teachers are obligated to incorporate EFG material into the curriculum. Bringing Japan, China and Korean elements into the curriculum is therefore highly encouraged as it will bring children's awareness of Asia, its cultures, size, geography, traditions, economies, etc... to a new level and help them to think globally. Children's futures are also influenced by yesterday's and today's Asia. And as we watch the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games we begin to see that our environment is also linked to Asia both globally and at a more intimate level for the Olympic athletes. It is with these thoughts in mind that I plan to incorporate Asia and most specifically China into my curriculum. Students must be brought to think farther than their small hometown. The world is shrinking at an ever increasing rate.

On a daily basis I will teach approximately 100 students in Mandarin Chinese. The high school students will come to Chinese class for 95 minutes each day all year. Elementary and Middle school students are on a rotation of either six weeks or nine weeks, but by the end of the year all 650 students will have taken Chinese at some level. The Chinese language is to be taught 75% to 80% of the time and other aspects of China and the Asian region are to be taught for the remainder. This is according to Hamilton

County Department of Education and the State of Tennessee standards. It is in this remainder portion that a number of projects will take place regarding Asia and specifically China in relation to the EFG curriculum (rough copies of these projects are attached).

The first major project students will encounter will be Air Pollution and the Olympic Games. Students will learn Chinese vocabulary concerning Beijing's condition. Then they will discuss this after reading news articles about Beijing's air before the cleanup, during and after the Olympics. Chattanooga was once a dangerously dirty city. Students will compare methods and results between Beijing and Chattanooga. This project will end with a short skit/play before the class in Chinese using the designated vocabulary, as well as a written paper.

During a NCTA lecture on Chinese geography the use of coal and other natural resources was hit upon. The USA is still currently leading the world in oil consumption, but China is catching up fast. China also uses enormous amounts of coal for heating and electricity. For the students' second project, the use of fossil fuels vs. alternative fuels will be compared with China as the game board. 21st Century Academy is technology oriented with a number of Mac labs. Students will create an individual blog discussing fuels and energy and their employment in China with links, videos, and pictures gathered from around the web. Students will research, create and report on long-term aspects of Chinese energy use as compared to the US and the rest of the world. Students will then visit each other's blogs and grade them based on a rubric, thus learning from each other.

In a third project, the most influential of all Chinese soft politics will be discussed: Chinese food. American children know very little about the food they consume everyday. It is hoped that by teaching the health and economic benefits of a Chinese diet children will begin to make better choices in their diets. While our cafeteria does not have the resources to prepare a Chinese meal, students individually do. At the end of the unit, students will prepare a healthy Chinese dish to pass. They will be graded on with ability with Chinese vocabulary concerning cooking and foods as they were used in the class in dialogues, texts and listening comprehension activities.

In addition to the projects above a brief history of China will be taught including China's first emperor: Qin Shi Huang in a slideshow presentation and an article reading. These lessons will increase students' knowledge of the beginnings of imperial China, the state of Chinese technology, including war technology, during that time and knowledge to compare to world history course knowledge on the Roman Empire in terms of people, territory and the time period. Students will begin to gain knowledge about the Chinese system of governmental control and how this was passed down for thousands of years.

Later we will continue discussion in chronological order with the Han Wall – the point at which the Great Wall of China was expanded and the Empire was also, while the way things were (government...) did not change much. We will discuss briefly the differences between the Qin and the Han and students will read a legendary story about a woman who has lost her husband to the building of the Great Wall.

The China's Golden Age – the Tang Dynasty with its capital along the Silk Road, religious freedoms and economic prosperity. Students will learn the story of Yang Guifei who's legendary beauty supposedly was the downfall of the emperor.

The Silk Road will be explored in greater detail during this unit with students running a project of trading along it similar to the old Oregon Trail games playing in America. They will stop at trading posts exchange goods, encounter dangers, and try to reach far western Asia and trade their precious materials. There are a number of projects like this already created and available on the internet. This project might take too long to be done just in Chinese class, therefore I have talked with some middle school teachers who are interested in the project and plan on running their own version of this. Chinese Class will provide materials to these teachers.

Zheng He's navigation of the Pacific and Indian Oceans will be a small unit which will bring in and compare Christopher Columbus with Zheng He in terms of the voyage, the timing, the fleet particulars and their respective homeland economies and governments and the individual men's characteristics. This will likely be only a two to three day lesson using the reading from NCTA to introduce it and some text material with additional material from the internet about Christopher Columbus' voyage.

An introduction to Communist China beginning with Mao Zi Dong. The video documentary called China – A Century of Revolution will be shown in parts in the class

to explain China as a whole during its turbulent years. The class will dig deeper into the character of Chairman Mao. A positive and negative results poster of Chairman Mao's actions will be created by the class during this time and added to as the unit progresses. If I am able to get a copy of Time's – Tian An Men documentary, pieces of this will also be shown to describe Deng Xiao Ping and the Central Government's views regarding democracy and control over the people.

I have relatively little ability in art, but the traditional arts of paper cutting and brush calligraphy will also be included. A short unit on the Chinese zodiac will be included. Students will find their own signs based off of the Chinese calendar by year, month, time of day born and their elements. They will then create a poster describing themselves using Chinese characters and zodiac symbolism (younger classes).

Many projects will only be explored to their full extent by the high school Chinese class, while simplified or altered versions will be utilized with the middle school and elementary classes, or not used at all. All above mentioned projects and curriculum points are subject to detailing or alteration as ideas for an improved curriculum arise.

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