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EAST ASIA UNIT

This action plan is designed for a 7th/8th grade world geography class. The textbook we use is published by Holt, Rhinehart and Winston and is titled *People, Places and Change*. The copyright date is 2001. The East Asia and Southeast Asia Unit consists of three chapters: one on China, Mongolia and Taiwan; one on Japan and the Koreas; and one on Southeast Asia. For the purpose of this action plan, I will concentrate on the first two chapters concerning China, Japan and the Koreas.

Resource List:

Doran, Clare. The Japanese. New York: Thomson Learning, 1995.

Ellington, Lucien. Japan A Global Studies Handbook. Santa Barbara, California: ABL-CLIO, 2002.

Hamill, Sam and J.P. Seaton, translators and editors. The Poetry of Zen. Boston: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 2004.

Holt, Rhinehart and Winston. People, Places and Change. Austin, Texas: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 2001.

Jacobs, Heidi Hayes et al. Asia and the Pacific. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Lambert, David. Continents Asia. Austin, Texas: Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 1998.

McLenighan, Valjean. China A History to 1949. Chicago: Regensteiner Publishing Enterprises, Inc., 1983.

Paterson, Katherine. Rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom. New York: Lodestar Books, 1983.

Shirokauer, Conrad et al. A Brief History of Chinese and Japanese Civilizations. United State of America: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006.

Tregear, Mary. Chinese Art. New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1997.

Initially, we will look at various maps of Asia including physical, political, climate, population, land use and resource maps. As we study these different maps, the students will be asked to consider the following questions:

1. How do physical features make travel and trade difficult?
2. How do physical features affect population density?
3. Which physical features form natural borders between countries?
4. What kind of climate do China, Japan and the Koreas have?
5. Which areas of the region are more affected by monsoons and why?
6. To what can low population density in western China be attributed?
7. How does the location of natural resources affect land use and population density?
8. How is land use affected in the Yangtze and Yellow river valleys?
9. What kinds of economic activity are found along the river valleys?

The next step in this unit will be to create a giant timeline. Using a roll of butcher paper, I intend to create a timeline that begins at 5000B.C.E. and extends to today. I will then laminate the timeline. Using a different color dry erase marker for each country, we will mark important historical events to compare and contrast developments in art, culture and economics for the three countries. For China, which had the main cultural influence in East Asia, the various dynastic ruling families are very important as well as the appearance of Confucianism and Buddhism in Chinese culture. When we study Japan, we will study the ruling families but also the creation of a Japanese “constitution” in the

7th century, the importance of the Samurai and the Daimyo, and important literary works that came about around the year 1000 C.E. As for the Koreas, we will look at the influence of Chinese and Japanese rule over the country as well as the kingdoms of Silla and Koryo.

<u>Year</u>	Rice farmers cultivate area near Chang River	Rice farming develops		
5000 B.C.E.			Yayoi Culture	China invades
800 B.C.E.	Qin dynasty			
200 B.C.E.	Han dynasty		Tomb period	Kingdoms of Silla, Koguryo & Paekche
200 C.E.				Silla control of peninsula
400 C.E.	Tang dynasty		Heian period	
600 C.3.				Kingdom of Koryo
800 C.E.	Song dynasty		Kamakura period	
1000 C.E.			Ashikaga period	Yi dynasty (Choson)
1200 C.E.	Ming dynasty			
1400 C.E.	Qing		Tokugawa period	Japanese control
1600 C.E.			Modern Japan	Division of peninsula
1800 C.E.	Chinese republic Guomindang P.R.C.			
2000 C.E.			<u>Korea</u>	
	<u>Japan</u>			
<u>China</u>	Jomon culture			

Cultural topics that I plan to cover are:

Daoism – “the path”; belief that people should try to follow a path that conforms to nature and avoid everyday concerns. Every thing, living and nonliving, has a spirit that may reward good deeds or bring bad luck.

Confucianism – philosophy that stresses five relationships that are reciprocal but not egalitarian. Each relationship emphasizes the importance of family, justice and respect:

1) Parent/child; 2) Husband/wife; 3) Sibling/sibling; 4) Friend/friend; and 5)

Ruler/subject.

Buddhism – a religion that traveled from India that promotes enlightenment through meditation and the search for truth and knowledge.

Shintoism – earliest known religion of Japan that centers on *Kami* which are spirits of natural places, sacred animals and ancestors. Priests or shamans communicate with the spirits to make their wishes known.

Shamanism – similar to Shintoism, natural places and ancestors have spirits. Many mountains in Korea are particularly sacred.

I will introduce the basic tenets of each belief system and compare and contrast them. I will explain what *syncretism* is and how it affects these countries today. I will also introduce the students to various forms of the arts from each country including Japanese and Zen gardens, architecture, music using traditional instruments, theater (Beijing Opera, Kabuki, No), pottery, paintings, wooden block prints, sculpture, clothing, poetry (Zen and haiku) and literature (folktales and historical fiction). Food is also a great way to introduce culture. We will sample different foods from each country including sushi, kimchi, bulgogi, noodles, seaweed, etc.

In order to integrate this Asia unit into our English curriculum, the students will read a book by Katherine Paterson called *Rebels of the Heavenly Kingdom*. It takes place in China during the early 1850's. It is the story of a young boy kidnapped by bandits from his home in Hunan and brought to Kwangsi where his freedom is bought by a young woman who is a captain in the army of the Heavenly Kingdom. They are rebelling against the Manchu empire. Many cultural elements and themes are explained in the book including the binding of girls' feet, the mandatory pigtailed that the men wore, the Opium War against the "long-nosed foreigners", and the introduction of Christianity into China.