



Women in Traditional China and their Portrayal in Chinese Folktales

Guide for Curriculum Unit 84.04.03
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“Women in Traditional China and their Portrayal in Chinese Folktales” is a unit which is intended for use among intermediate students at the high school level. The main focus is traditional Chinese attitudes toward women as reflected in ancient folktales.

A major objective is to acquaint students with the culture and history of China so as to give them an understanding of the customs, traditions and folklore of the country. In addition, providing students with background reading, films and lectures on the history of China is essential to helping students gain an understanding of China as a culture.

Since the major emphasis of this unit is on the portrayal of women in Chinese literature, a number of folktales as well as a novel will be examined. Selected readings which provide information concerning traditional and contemporary roles of women in China, folklore of women and traditional beliefs and attitudes about women have been included.

The number of selections which students are required to read can be left to the discretion of the classroom teacher. The suggested student bibliography allows for flexibility. It is suggested that four to six weeks be spent on this unit but the teacher may opt to spend a longer or shorter period of time.

This unit was designed for use in a senior high school English class, but it could certainly be used as part of a geography or social studies class. An interdisciplinary course (preferably English and social studies) could also make use of the materials found in this unit.

(Recommended for English classes, grades 10 through 12)

Key Words

Chinese Folklore Oral Tradition History Ancient Women China

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