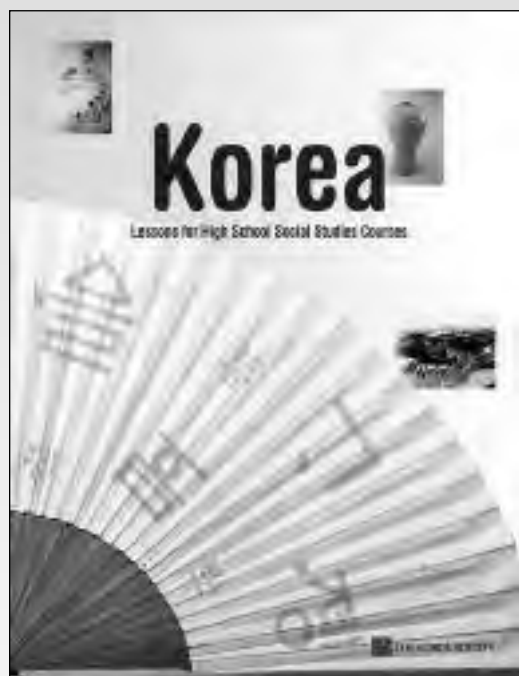


CURRICULUM MATERIALS REVIEWS



Korea: Lessons for High School Social Studies Courses

PUBLISHED 1999 BY THE KOREA SOCIETY

950 THIRD AVENUE, 8TH FLOOR

NEW YORK, NY 10022

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ISBN: 1-892887-00-2

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CONTENT

This curriculum package contains 12 lesson plans on Korea, covering history, literature, geography, economics, women's issues, and reunification, as well as useful appendices featuring a time line, extensive bibliography, maps, and web sites.

The specific multi-page lesson plans, many with primary sources, are :

1. Five National Treasures (presenting Korean contributions to culture)
2. Historical Overview (interaction between Korea and her neighbors over time)
3. Korea's Geography (geographic factors that have shaped Korean history)
4. The Miracle on the Han: Economic Currents (moving from an agriculturally-based society to an industrial one.)
5. The Japanese Occupation of Korea: 1910–45 (the impact on Korea's cultural, economic, and political life)
6. Remembering the Forgotten War (the Korean War through the words of survivors and participants)
7. South Koreans in the Vietnam War (the effects of South Korea's presence in Vietnam)
8. Women at the Crossroads (primary sources exploring women's lives during five major eras of Korean history)
9. Special Readings (interviews with Koreans illuminate the past)
10. The Two Koreas: Will they ever reunite? (the circumstances that created two Koreas)
11. Global Connections: Koreans Abroad (challenges and successes of Koreans abroad)
12. The Modernization of Seoul (political, social, and economic evolution)

ORGANIZATION

Each lesson opens with an introduction and overview and goes on to procedure/activities; handouts consisting of readings, exercises, charts, graphs, maps are provided. Some lessons have objectives and resources listed. The table of contents, layout, and appendices make navigating the book simple.

Lesson plans are bound in a three-ring binder so that readings may be easily removed and copied for student use. The design is aesthetically pleasing: the cover of each lesson plan has photographs with an overview of the lesson. Three poems between each chapter are bound with an overlay of onion skin printed with the poem in Hangul translated into English.

ANALYSIS

Having used some of the lesson plans in my National Consortium for Teaching about Asia (NCTA) seminar for social studies teachers, I can say that the lessons are teachable and relatively complete for the novice Korea scholar. The handouts, especially the primary sources, were helpful and well focused. Although nine of the twelve plans focus on the last 50 years in Korea, they remain appropriate for a general Social Studies class; at least five of the plans are appropriate for a World History class; at least five are appropriate for a Geography class.

The outline maps without labels are useful for student exercises, and the maps with labels are some of the best and most reproducible that I've seen. The fine bibliography should keep a researcher busy for a long time; there are numerous entries in the categories of foreign relations, culture, language, religion, art/music, literature, history, economics, and Korean-American topics. The web sites listed generally follow the topics of each lesson plan.

Lesson 9, Special Readings, has the benefit of presenting Korean voices, interviews with Koreans about the past, paired

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with discussion questions on each reading. The interview with the businessman who had been a teenager during the Korean War gives insight into the agony of family separation and the torments of war. It would be a powerful tool to help students begin to understand the two Koreas.

Lesson 1, Five National Treasures, inspired me to create a power point presentation based on the treasures featured: Sokkuram Grotto, Tripitaka Koreana, Chongmyo Shrine, Changdikkung palace, and Hwasong Fortress. These are the latest national treasures in Korea to be named to the World Heritage List by UNESCO due to their association with ideas of universal significance. The lesson plan has a one to two page student reading hand-out on each treasure, a map of their



locations, sample questions for group discussion, a data retrieval chart, and activities to support the study, as well as web sites for student use. I was not able to access three of the five listed web sites, but web site addresses are ephemeral and it is easy to find sites on most anything, even Korean artifacts, on Google.

NITPICKING

I wanted to see a pronunciation guide for the transliteration; uninitiated teachers may struggle with proper names. When teachers aren't comfortable with the words, their students won't be either. The introduction promises "a list of commonly used Korean words with English phonetics for students and teachers," but my copy had no such list.

The format of plans was inconsistent; some had objectives and resources, others did not; while this was not a big bother, some formats were more user friendly than others. Some pesky typos cropped up.

Lastly, I found a few nationalistic references inconsistent with other texts. Even though I am a strong Korea partisan, I noted that a few, a very few, statements tended toward hyperbole. These plans are written from a Korean perspective, and so it should be; it will be useful to ask students to take on that perspective as they enter into the study of each culture. That alone is a valuable exercise in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

I will continue to use these plans for teachers' seminars and believe that high school social studies teachers can use them successfully in their own classes. They are engaging, provocative, and eminently accessible.

JESSICA STOWELL teaches Intercultural Communication and East Asian Studies. She participated in the Asian Studies Development Program Chinese Philosophy and Culture Institute in 1993, and the Korea Culture and Society Institute in 1997. She is the Coordinator for the Oklahoma Institute for Teaching East Asia at the University of Oklahoma in Tulsa.



2003 SUMMER SESSION of ASIAN STUDIES SOPHIA UNIVERSITY, Tokyo

Sophia University's 43rd Summer Session of Asian Studies will take place from July 25 to August 16, 2003. Among the courses to be offered are: Basic Japanese, History of Edo and Tokyo, Japanese Theater, Contemporary Japanese Economy, Japanese Business and Management, Japanese Literature and the City, Survey of Japanese Art, Contemporary Chinese Society, Contemporary Japanese Society, and Comparative Asian Industrial Systems.

The Summer Session also provides opportunities for students to attend Noh and Kabuki performances, visit the headquarters of a new religion, participate in the arts of the tea ceremony and flower arrangement, visit some of Tokyo's major museums, and attend special lectures by prominent experts on Japan. All of Tokyo is also available for study and exploration.

As much as possible, courses are conducted in such a way as to allow students to relate their studies to what it is possible to see and do in Tokyo. Tuition for six credits is 140,000 yen. For further information, contact:

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