

Title:	Environmental Roots and the Tree of Modern China
Author:	Eric Katz
Subject Area:	Global History
Grade Level:	9-12
Time Required:	Three 45-minute class periods
Standards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSS-G.K-12.5 Environment and Society: Students will understand how human actions modify the physical environment. • NSS-WH5-12.3 Era 3: Classical Religions, Major Religions, Giant Empires, 1000 BC to 300 Bc: Students will learn how major religions and large-scale empires arose in the Mediterranean basin, China, and India, 500 BCE-300 CE. • NSS-WH.5-12.9 Era 9: Students will understand major global trends since WWII.
Keywords / Vocabulary:	Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Dongba, sustainability
Essential Question(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have to say about nature and the environment? • Are their traditional roots for a modern environmental movement in China? • How are current modernization trends within China affecting the Chinese and global environment? • Which will take priority: development, nature, or both?
Learning Objectives / Goals / Aims:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will improve their ability to analyze primary and secondary sources. 2. Students will gain a better understanding of development trends within China. 3. Students will enhance their knowledge of traditional Chinese belief systems. 4. Students will learn Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist and, to a lesser extent, Dongba, thought on nature and protecting the environment. 5. Students will learn about initiatives within China to raise awareness of and increase conservation and human stewardship of the environment.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Students will construct an argument of their own that analyzes and synthesizes the provided sources regarding China and the environment. 7. Students will write an essay that analyzes and synthesizes the provided resources regarding China and the environment. 8. As a follow-up activity, students will engage in a debate on the topic.
<p>Introduction:</p>	<p>Our students will live in a world that is to a large extent shaped by what happens in China. With the world's largest population of 1.4 billion, China is a nation that is undergoing rapid development. Growing wealth, materialism, energy use, and industrialization in China have the potential for enormous environmental impacts. Will a rise in the standard of living of Chinese people cause the same kind of environmental destruction that has accompanied these trends in other parts of the world in the past? Is there anything within traditional Chinese belief systems that might impact the path of development in the near future?</p> <p>This lesson will begin to address these critical issues that have the potential to, as Jonathan Watts has said in his book, <u>When a Billion Chinese Jump</u>, "save or destroy mankind." Through engaging in analysis and synthesis of materials related to Chinese belief systems, the environment and modern development, students will make their own judgments about our yet undetermined fate.</p>
<p>Procedure / Pedagogical Technique / Instructional Strategy:</p>	<p>Day One:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will begin class with the following simple, easy to answer, warm-up motivator: What are ways in which you influence the environment? Write down 5 ways. 2. In whole-class discussion, students will brainstorm ideas and the teacher can quickly write the ideas down on the Smartboard. 3. Students will look at a graph that shows the population trends and answer several questions about population growth, China and the rest of the world. This will bring out the key idea that given its population, China's development path will have a major impact on the world. This 5 minute exercise will lead into the main activity for the remainder of class. 4. Students will look at a number of documents, analyze them, and begin to answer questions about each document.

	<p>Day Two:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will continue to answer the document questions, synthesize the information and create a thesis statement based upon the documents. 2. Students will prepare an outline or planning page for their essay. <p>Day Three:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will write a DBQ essay using evidence from the documents.
<p>Discussion Points / Groups Interaction:</p> <p>Assessment:</p>	<p>As an alternative to the essay, students can discuss the following questions in pairs, small groups or whole class discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have to say about nature and the environment? • Are their traditional roots for a modern environmental movement in China? • How are current modernization trends within China affecting the Chinese and global environment? • Which will take priority: development, nature, or both? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activity will be assessed through review of the answers that the students write for each document. This can be simply reviewed or graded as a quiz. • The essay will be graded on the standard NYS rubric for global history. The essay can be graded as the equivalent of a test grade.
<p>Closure:</p>	<p>The teacher can wrap up the activity after the essays are written (or the discussion takes place) by reaffirming the key points that can be drawn from the activity documents. Briefly summarized here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Chinese beliefs do express concern and a need to protect the environment. • Rapid development in China has not sufficiently addressed environmental issues. • There is an increasing awareness of the importance within China for sustainable development. • The Chinese can look to earlier traditions for inspiration for environmental initiatives.
<p>Instructional Resources /</p>	<p>This lesson requires some preparation beforehand. A Smartboard or PowerPoint presentation with the initial warm-up question and population graph should be prepared.</p>

<p>Materials:</p>	<p>In addition, students will each need a copy of the documents and the DBQ rubric (if an essay is to be included as part of this assignment).</p> <p>Graph can be found at: http://visualizingeconomics.com/2007/12/09/comparing-population-growth-china-india-africa-latin-america-western-europe-united-states/</p> <p>Additional sources of documents include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watts, Jonathan. <i>When a billion Chinese jump: how China will save mankind--or destroy it</i>. New York: Scribner, 2010. Print. 2. "Earth Charter, ESD and Chinese Philosophies", Yunhua Liu and Alicia Constable, <i>Journal of Education for Sustainable Development</i>, 4:2, (2010), pgs. 193-202. http://jsd.sagepub.com/content/4/2/193.full.pdf+html 3. Dalai Lama quotes: http://www.rudyh.org/dalai-lama-quotes-quotations.htm#env 4. Photographs by Lu Guang, winner of the Eugene Smith Grant in Humanistic Photography for his documentary project "Pollution in China." http://www.chinahush.com/2009/10/21/amazing-pictures-pollution-in-china/ 5. China: The Year in Environment-Pictures. Jonathan Watts, February 3, 2011. http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/gallery/2011/feb/03/china-year-in-environment#/picture=371232647&index=11 6. http://china-environmental-news.blogspot.com/ 7. <i>China's Coming Environmental Renaissance</i>, piece by Yingling Liu, Worldwatch China Program Manager, http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5510
<p>Extending the Lesson / Follow-up Activity:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students can do additional independent investigation and prepare arguments on alternate sides of a related debate such as one of the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature will win in the environmental protection vs. economic development race in China • Spiritual beliefs will save China's environment 2. A second activity that might be a very worthwhile follow-up to this lesson is a screening and discussion of the film, <i>Manufactured Landscapes</i>, based on the photographs of Edward Burtynsky.