

The Age of Faith



The Inquiry Arc in U.S. History

Jonathan Burack

The Mandate of Heaven

MindSparks®

CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

HS11123E v1.0

Manuscript Editor: Sarah Fuller
Book Layout: Linda Deverich
Cover Design: Mark F. Gutierrez
Editorial Director: Dawn P. Dawson

© 2019 MindSparks, a division of Social Studies School Service
All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America

MindSparks
10200 Jefferson Boulevard, P.O. Box 802
Culver City, CA 90232-0802
United States of America

(310) 839-2436
(800) 421-4246

www.mindsparks.com
access@mindsparks.com

Only those pages intended for student use as handouts may be reproduced by the teacher who has purchased this volume. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording—without prior written permission from the publisher.

Links to online sources are provided in the teacher pages and text. Please note that these links were valid at the time of production, but the websites may have since been discontinued.

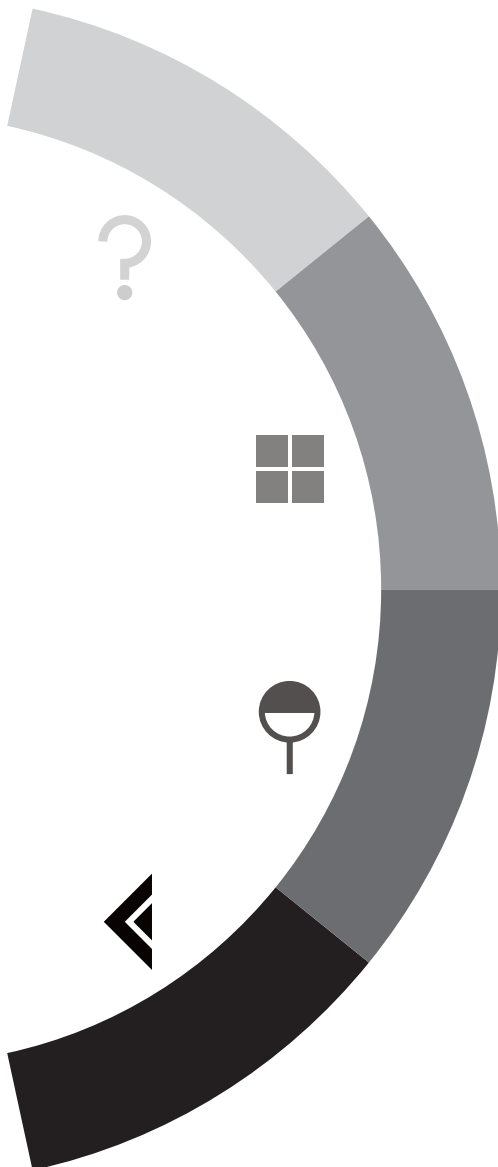
e-book ISBN: 978-1-57596-511-6
Product Code: HS11123E v1.0

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Overview.....	5
Teaching Instructions.....	7
Handouts	
Introductory Essay.....	10
History Group.....	12
Civics Group.....	15
Economics Group.....	18
Geography Group.....	21
How to Analyze a Primary Source.....	24
Primary Source Packet.....	25
Communicating Results and Taking Action.....	37
The Mandate of Heaven Rubric.....	38
Primary Source Bibliography.....	39
Sources for Further Study.....	40

C3 Framework

This book is based primarily on the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards. This C3 Framework is an effective tool offering guidance and support for rigorous student learning. The assignments encourage students to be active participants in learning and to explore the parts of history that they find most compelling. Central to the C3 Framework and our use of it is its Inquiry Arc—a set of four interrelated dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies. The lessons in this book are based on all four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc. While the C3 Framework analyzes each of the four dimensions separately, they are not entirely separable in practice—they each interact in dynamic ways. As a result, the lessons combine some or all of the dimensions in various ways.



Four Dimensions of the Inquiry Arc

1 Developing compelling and supporting questions and planning inquiries

Questions shape social studies inquiries, giving them broader meaning and motivating students to master content and engage actively in the learning process.

2 Applying disciplinary concepts and tools

These are the concepts and central ideas needed to address the compelling and supporting questions students pose. The C3 Framework stresses four subject fields: history, civics, economics, and geography. Each lesson addresses all of these disciplines.

Evaluating sources and using evidence

- 3 The purpose of using primary and secondary sources as evidence is to support claims and counterclaims. By assessing the validity and usefulness of sources, including those that conflict with one another, students are able to construct evidence-based explanations and arguments.

4 Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

While this may take the form of individual essays and other writing assignments, these lessons stress other kinds of individual and collaborative forms of communication, including debates, policy analyses, video productions, diary entries, and interviews. Meaningful forms of individual or collaborative civic action are also incorporated into each lessons.

How to Use This Book

This book offers you the chance to implement the entire C3 Inquiry Arc in brief, carefully structured lessons on important topics in world history. Each lesson is driven by a central compelling question, and disciplinary supporting questions are provided. Each lesson asks students to apply understandings from all of the C3 disciplines—history, civics, economics, and geography—and each lesson includes individual and group tasks in an integrated way.

Each lesson also includes an introductory essay, detailed teaching instructions, a set of primary sources, and the handouts needed to implement the lesson's assignments. Rubrics for student evaluation and sources for further study are also provided. The teaching instructions suggest a time frame for completion of each lesson, but the assessments can easily be adapted to fit into any lesson plan.

Each lesson also is aligned with several C3 Framework standards and Common Core State Standards. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Literacy emphasize the reading and information texts, making these lessons ideal for integration into English Language Arts instruction.



C3 Disciplines



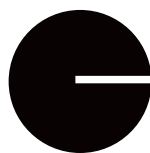
History



Civics



Economics



Geography



The Mandate of Heaven

What Does It Explain about China's Past?

Overview

Introduction

China's concept of the "Mandate of Heaven" was like the European concept of the "Divine Right of Kings." In China's case, "Heaven," not God, granted the emperor the sole right to rule on Earth. "Heaven" referred to the basic divine or spiritual force guiding the universe. The Chinese emperor had a right to rule because he had received Heaven's Mandate. An emperor with the Mandate could ensure that the natural and human world would be in harmony with Heaven's moral purpose. To keep the Mandate, an emperor and his heirs were expected to rule justly and benevolently. If one of them did not, he and the dynasty he headed could be overthrown. The Mandate would then pass to the founder of a new dynasty. Did Chinese reality ever correspond to this idea of the Mandate of Heaven? Why did this idea have such a long-lasting role in Chinese thought? What does it help us to understand about China? This last question is the compelling question this lesson will focus on. Students will work with ten primary sources that form the core content for tasks that will help them answer the lesson's compelling question.

Objectives

Students will work individually and in small groups to respond in a meaningful way to a compelling question about the Mandate of Heaven. They will apply discipline-specific background knowledge, use scaffolding, and engage in instructional activities to interpret primary sources before presenting their ideas to the class.

C3 Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **D1.4.6-8.** Explain how the relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.
- ◆ **D1.5.6-8.** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of views represented in the sources.
- ◆ **D2.HIS.5.6-8.** Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time
- ◆ **D2.HIS.11.6-8.** Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.
- ◆ **D2.HIS.12.6-8.** Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.
- ◆ **D2.HIS.16.6-8.** Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- ◆ **D2.ECO.7.6-8.** Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- ◆ **D2.GEO.5.6-8.** Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.
- ◆ **D2.GEO.6.6-8.** Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.
- ◆ **D3.1.6-8.** Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- ◆ **D3.2.6-8.** Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.
- ◆ **D3.3.6-8.** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.

- ◆ **D3.4.6-8.** Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.
- ◆ **D4.1.6-8.** Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- ◆ **D4.3.6-8.** Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- ◆ **D4.6.6-8.** Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

Common Core Anchor Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1.** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2.** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6.** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9.** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1.** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Teaching Instructions

Compelling Question

The Mandate of Heaven: What does it explain about China's past?

Preparation

Provide all students with a copy of the Introductory Essay. Assign this reading as homework. In addition, assign all relevant parts of your course textbook or other basic reading material. Remind students to keep the compelling question for the lesson in mind as they read.



Asking Questions about the Mandate of Heaven

This part of the lesson stresses Dimensions 1 and 2 of the C3 Framework

Day One

1. Briefly discuss the Introductory Essay in class and address any initial questions students may have.
2. Distribute the How to Analyze a Primary Source handout. Review each suggestion with the class and remind students to refer back to the handout as they read the primary sources in this lesson.
3. Divide the class into four small groups. Each group will focus its work on one of the four basic disciplines identified in Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework—history, civics, economics, or geography. As they work, the groups should keep in mind the unit's overall compelling question. However, for Day One and Day Two, each group will work mainly with a second compelling question—one related specifically to its assigned discipline.
4. Provide each group with one copy of its discipline-specific Assignment Sheet. Give each student a copy of all the primary sources for this unit. Each group may share a primary source packet, if necessary.
5. Have students complete the Day One section of their Assignment Sheets. The objective for Day One is for groups to read three primary sources, and then formulate one supporting question about each of those sources. The supporting questions should be recorded in the spaces provided on the Assignment Sheet.



Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Evaluating Sources and Evidence

This part of the lesson stresses Dimensions 2 and 3 of the C3 Framework

Day Two

6. Students will return to their previously assigned groups and formulate a claim addressing their group's compelling question. After reading the remaining seven primary sources, they will select one that supports their claim.

7. Using the evidence gathered from primary sources, each group will then prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation about the Mandate of Heaven from their group's disciplinary perspective. The presentation can be in the form of an oral report, a debate among group members, a PowerPoint, or related type of presentation. Allow time for students to prepare by discussing and debating topics among themselves.

Day Three

8. Each group will deliver its presentation. Allow time for class discussion following each presentation, and for a final effort to answer the central compelling question for the lesson.



Communicating Results and Taking Action

This part of the lesson stresses Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework

Students will complete a final project that expresses an understanding of the topic and responds clearly to the lesson's central compelling question. The project may be completed in groups, but students should be evaluated individually.

Distribute the Communicating Results and Taking Action handout, and decide whether you will assign the projects or allow students to form groups and choose tasks on their own. Set a reasonable deadline. Students should review the Mandate of Heaven Rubric so they can understand how their performance will be evaluated. The projects are summarized below.

Communicating Results

- ◆ Confucius once said this about government: "Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it." Have students write a long letter to Confucius commenting on this passage. In the letter, they must refer in detail to at least three of the primary sources for this lesson in explaining their views about this quotation.
- ◆ Have students compose a set of letters exchanged by Confucius, Mencius, and Han Feizi in which they discuss with one another the true meaning of the idea of the Mandate of Heaven. The letters should make detailed comments on Primary Sources 3.7, 3.8, and 3.9.
- ◆ Separate students into small groups. Each group's task is to learn more about one large peasant uprising in China's past. The group should develop a presentation on this uprising using Power Point or some other presentation software. The presentation should include references to Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, and 3.10 as well as any other sources the group feels are relevant. Have each group share its presentation with the class.

Taking Action

- ◆ Have students use Power Point or other presentation software to create a tourists' overview of the Forbidden City. Find photographs and diagrams of the entire compound of palaces and halls. Include information on the Meridian Gate, the Gate of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Medium Harmony, the Hall of Protective Harmony, the Hall of Heavenly Peace, the Hall of Union and Peace, and the Hall of Earthly Peace—and any other features that should be a part of the tour. Include brief written descriptions of these features explaining their purpose in the overall plan of the Forbidden City. The overall theme of the presentation should be to explain how the Forbidden City reflects the traditional Chinese view of the emperor as the “Son of Heaven,” ruling according to the Mandate of Heaven. Share the presentation with other classes in the school.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, use social media to share the presentation with others. Invite people contacted in this way to comment and offer their own thoughts about the Forbidden City and the ideas the presentation expresses.

Introductory Essay

The Mandate of Heaven



King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty

Throughout history, powerful leaders have insisted on their right to rule. In our society, leaders claim that right by winning the votes of citizens in an election. That was not how rulers in most ancient societies justified their power. In Europe, leaders often claimed to rule by the “Divine Right of Kings.” This meant that God gave them and their family line the legitimate right to rule. Only their children or other family members could ever inherit this right.

China’s concept of the Mandate of Heaven was like the European concept of the Divine Right of Kings. This idea said that Heaven granted the emperor the

sole right to rule on Earth. “Heaven” in this case meant the basic divine or spiritual force guiding the universe. The Chinese emperor had a right to rule once he had received Heaven’s “mandate”—or permission. In that way, the Chinese emperor would ensure that the natural and human world would be in harmony with Heaven’s moral purpose.

However, this concept is not exactly like the Divine Right of Kings. A ruler could lose the Mandate of Heaven. He could do this by lacking good moral character and failing to rule for the good of his people. Signs that the Mandate had fallen would appear. A time of chaos and rebellion would set in. Foreign forces might invade. Huge natural disasters such as drought, floods, or famine might occur. In such times, an evil emperor could be overthrown. A new dynasty (that is, a royal family line) would begin. Ancient Chinese historical records usually describe that new ruler as morally upright and benevolent. They said the Mandate had been transferred to that new ruler and his heirs.

Another way in which the Mandate differed from the Divine Right of Kings had to do with who that new ruler could be. The new dynasty did not have to begin with a noble family. In fact, in a few cases, dynasty-ending rebellions have led to a new dynasty founded by a peasant leader.

According to ancient Chinese historians, the first ruler to claim the Mandate was King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BCE). The emperor he replaced was seen as corrupt and selfish. By contrast, King Wen was said to be a virtuous and benevolent ruler. As a result, the previous Shang Dynasty was soon defeated, and the Zhou Dynasty took control.

There was only one Heaven. In the view of many Chinese, this meant there should be only one ruler. Hence, the emperor came to be referred to as the “Son of Heaven.” The widely held idea was that China was one unified society meant to be ruled by one all-powerful emperor. China was, at times, divided into several states. Nevertheless, most people in China felt that their land was meant to be united under one Son of Heaven. The concept of the Mandate supports this ideal of the unity of the entire Chinese realm.

Does the Mandate of Heaven concept represent the reality of China and its history? China has in fact been unified under several long-lasting dynasties—for example, the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), the Tang (618–906 CE), the Ming (1368–1644) and the Qing (1644–1912). However, China has also been divided into several states many times. The idea of the emperor as the Son of Heaven does not seem to allow for more than one emperor at a time. Yet China’s history shows that there have often been times when this was not the case.

It was also not true that every first emperor of a new dynasty was a model of virtue. Some were. Quite a few were clearly not. Likewise, the last emperors of a dynasty were not always corrupt and selfish. Earthquakes, massive floods, and other natural disasters were supposed to signal Heaven’s displeasure with a dynasty. The same is true of social unrest and peasant rebellions. Yet there have been many huge natural disasters that did not signal the end of a dynasty. While some peasant rebellions led to the overthrow of a dynasty, China has seen many huge rebellions that failed to change much at all.

Yet the Mandate of Heaven concept has been a central one throughout China’s history. In many ways, it fits well with the key ideas of many of China’s major philosophers and writers, starting with Confucius. So, what does it tell us about China’s long history? The primary sources in this booklet should help you discuss, debate, and try to answer this question.



Confucius

Image sources: Public domain via Wikimedia Commons
Confucius. Circa 1770, courtesy of the Encyclopedia Britannica.



History Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

The Mandate of Heaven

Your group's task is to explore history issues related to the concept of the Mandate of Heaven. A disciplinary compelling question is provided. You will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow the steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

At times, a single dynasty ruled China for centuries. Such dynasties sometimes collapsed suddenly, and a new dynasty took over. Does the concept of the Mandate of Heaven explain this pattern? Why or why not?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.4, 3.6, and 3.10.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

In 221 BCE, the Qin Dynasty united all of China under its first emperor, Shihuangdi. The Qin was the first dynasty to truly unify all of China under a centrally controlled government. The earlier Shang and Zhou dynasties ruled more indirectly through locally powerful aristocrats and landowners. Shihuangdi was a strong, often ruthless emperor. He only had one Qin successor before the Qin Dynasty lost power in 206 BCE. The dynasty lasted only fifteen years.

Did the rise and fall of the Qin Dynasty follow the pattern described by the Mandate of Heaven concept? According to that concept, an old and corrupt dynasty loses the Mandate. It then passes to a new dynasty ruled by benevolent emperors concerned about the well-being of the people. The Qin Dynasty's first ruler may have been strong and effective. However, he cannot easily be seen as "benevolent." He imposed a strict system based on legalist theories. He created a huge army that expanded the realm

through conquest. He mobilized hundreds of thousands of peasants to work on vast projects. One of those was connecting China's walls into one Great Wall. Tens of thousands died in carrying out such projects. His rule provoked great unrest, and his successor paid the price. The dynasty fell only four years after Shihuangdi died.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.4

Primary Source 3.6

Primary Source 3.10

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

At times, a single dynasty ruled China for centuries. Such dynasties sometimes collapsed suddenly, and a new dynasty took over. Does the concept of the Mandate of Heaven explain this pattern? Why or why not?

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



GROUP MEMBERS:

The Mandate of Heaven

Your group's task is to explore the civics issues related to the Mandate of Heaven concept. A compelling question is provided. You will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Does the Mandate of Heaven concept justify popular rebellion against the established government? Why or why not?
3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.6, 3.7, and 3.9.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

The Mandate of Heaven places great stress on the ruler's benevolence. The Confucian term for this is *ren*—which means “the humane way a virtuous person treats others.” Heaven grants the Mandate to the leader whose *ren* guides him in ruling his people. Likewise, the Mandate is withdrawn from the ruler who does not rule with *ren*. The idea is that if the ruler lacks virtue, he will not care properly for his people when difficult problems arise. Such problems may be brought on by the chaos of war. Or they may be caused by natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, drought, and epidemic diseases. A good ruler will act to prevent massive famine or other suffering due to such disasters. If he fails to do this, the Mandate concept says this proves he lacks *ren*, or benevolence.

Does this then give his subjects the right to overthrow him? That seems to be what the Mandate concept suggests. In fact, dozens of large peasant uprisings have occurred throughout China's history. Some have succeeded in changing a dynasty. However, others have not. If a rebellion fails, does

this mean the ruler never really lost the Mandate? If so, doesn't that mean the people had no right to rebel? Some might say the people have a right to an all-powerful benevolent ruler but no absolute right to rebel or rule on their own. It is a debatable issue.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.6

Primary Source 3.7

Primary Source 3.9

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Does the Mandate of Heaven concept justify popular rebellion against the established government? Why or why not?

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



Economics Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

The Mandate of Heaven

Your group's task is to explore the economics issues related to the Mandate of Heaven concept. A compelling question is provided. You will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

“The Mandate of Heaven concept puts too much emphasis on the emperor's character as the key to keeping China's economy strong.” Explain why you do or do not agree with this statement.
3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, and 3.8.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

China was almost entirely an agricultural economy. The vast majority of China's people were poor peasants. They provided the northern wheat and southern rice the population needed. They also provided other basic goods such as cotton, silk, tea, and building materials. Over the centuries, small groups of craftspeople and merchants grew in importance. They invented many things—paper, steel-making methods, gunpowder, porcelain, and the compass. However, these commercial people were not highly regarded by the ruling group.

The peasants and others were ruled by a very small class of government officials. This ruling group included the emperors and their civil servants, who were usually local aristocrats and other wealthy landowners. The Mandate of Heaven holds the emperor responsible for the economic well-being of the society. Yet how much could the emperor and his government really do for the economy? Their main activity was to collect goods

and taxes from the peasants. They also conscripted millions of peasants into the armed forces and as workers on huge building projects. Those projects, such as roads and major canals, did have commercial value, but when drought or flood led to famine throughout the land, officials could do little to prevent the deaths of millions. Did an emperor's moral character matter much when these disasters struck? Perhaps to some extent, but in this society of vast numbers of poor peasants, it is not clear how much of a difference moral character could make.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.4

Primary Source 3.5

Primary Source 3.8

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

“The Mandate of Heaven concept puts too much emphasis on the emperor's character as the key to keeping China's economy strong.” Explain why you do or do not agree with this statement.

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



Geography Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

The Mandate of Heaven

Your group's task is to explore geography issues related to the Mandate of Heaven concept. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

How might China's geography and environment help explain the attraction of the Mandate of Heaven concept?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.2, 3.3, and 3.6.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Over the centuries, millions of peasants in China farmed small plots of land using simple tools of wood or stone. Their skills helped them make the most of China's fertile lands. As food production grew, so did China's population. In time, every bit of fertile land in China's eastern plains and southern rice-growing lands filled up. To the west, China was hemmed in by dry land, empty desert, and some of the highest mountains on Earth. This put severe limits on China's ability to expand to new lands as its population soared. Pastoral nomads—herding and horse-riding peoples—were at times a threat to China. When China tried to expand into the dry regions, it often met with fierce opposition from such societies. As China pushed westward, a strong emperor and powerful army were a necessity.

The mountains feed two long rivers, the Huang He (Yellow River) and the Yangtze. These rivers carry huge loads of soils down to the eastern plains. This keeps those lands fertile. However, the rivers can also be incredibly destructive. In flood times, they would often change course dramatically and cause enormous damage, killing tens of thousands or more.

As a result of these environmental factors, China often experienced drought, flood, and famine on a colossal scale. It is no wonder the Chinese looked on these natural events as signs of Heaven's displeasure.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the secondary source above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, choose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.2

Primary Source 3.3

Primary Source 3.6

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can back up with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

How might China's geography and environment help explain the attraction of the Mandate of Heaven concept?

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.

How to Analyze a Primary Source

For this lesson, you will be studying several primary source documents. This handout offers suggestions for how best to read and analyze historical primary sources. Studying such sources is challenging. They were created in a different time and place. Their language and use of certain key terms often differs from ours. They assume things we might not accept. They arise out of historical circumstances and settings that differ greatly from our own times. To use such sources as evidence, you need to apply some special historical thinking skills and habits. Here are some guidelines to help you do this.

◆ *Question the source*

No primary source was written with you and your interests in mind, so you need to be clear about what you are looking for when you examine a source. You need to stay in charge of the investigation. Act like a detective and ask questions. Above all, keep your own most important compelling questions in mind as you read and think about a source.

◆ *Consider the source's origins*

This is often simply called “sourcing.” It means asking who created the source, when and where the source was created, and why. If you know the source’s purpose, you will be more likely to see how it is shaped by its creator’s point of view. Among other things, sourcing can also help you decide how reliable or typical a source might be.

◆ *Contextualize the source*

“Context” here means the broader historical setting for the source. Sources are always a part of a larger historical context. You need to consider how this context helps clarify the meaning of the source. You also need to decide which context is most important. Sources might be understood best in connection with a local context or a recent event. Alternatively, they might be understood better within a national or international context, or as part of a long-term trend in society at large. Your guiding questions should help you decide which context is most important.

◆ *Corroborate the source*

This means you must think about your source in relation to other sources. Does the source agree with or support those other sources, or does it seem to be at odds with the other sources? Might there be additional sources, which have not been provided to you, that could support or conflict with your source?

◆ *Above all, read the source carefully*

Look at language closely. Pay attention to images, emotional language, metaphors, and other literary devices. Think about what is implied, not merely what is stated or claimed in so many words. Think about what is left out as well as what is included. Make inferences based on your close reading. This will help you get more out of your source than even the source’s creator might have seen in it.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

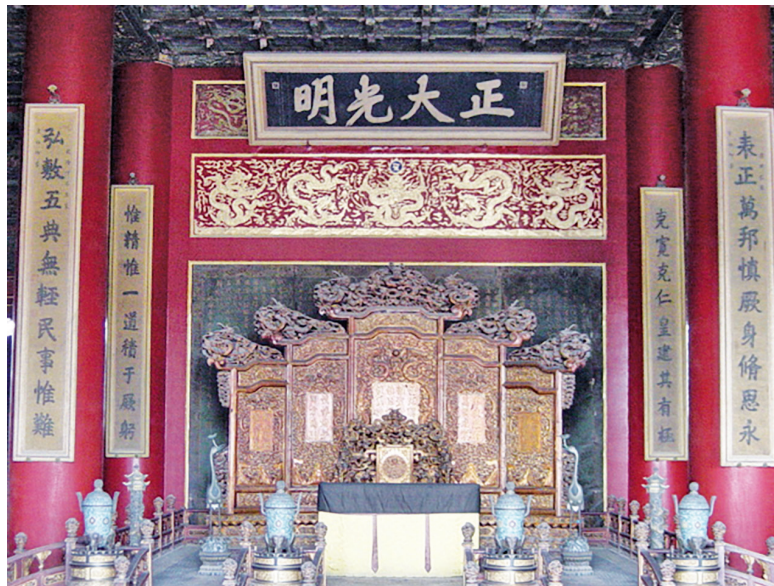
3.1

The Son of Heaven

Over the centuries, China was often ruled by a single all-powerful emperor who was regarded with awe as the “Son of Heaven.” He was seen to link the spiritual order of the universe (“Heaven”) with the human and natural orders. China has had sixty-seven dynasties with 446 emperors. Not all of these dynasties ruled the entire nation. One that did was the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). It was during that dynasty that the vast Forbidden City complex was built in Beijing. For over five hundred years, the emperors lived there. Photo 1A shows the Hall of Supreme Harmony, one of many palaces, halls, high walls, and other structures in the Forbidden City. Photo 1B is of the Dragon Throne of the Emperor in the Palace of Heavenly Purity. The Forbidden City was considered to be the center of the world. Together, these photos suggest the sense of power, mystery, and awe the emperor inspired in many Chinese people.

Original Documents

1A



1B

Original document sources: © Daniel Case / CC BY-SA 3.0
© DF08 / CC BY-SA 3.0

The Middle Kingdom and Its Surroundings

This map shows the main geographical regions of China. The most fertile areas are the Southern Hills, Sichuan, the Chinese Plain, and the Loess Plateau. Loess is a loosely compacted yellowish-gray soil. It blew in from drier areas to the west. The Loess Plateau is one place where China's civilization first arose. Its yellow silt filled China's rivers and made the Chinese Plain extremely fertile. Farther to the west are regions of desert, steppe grassland, and huge mountain ranges. Together, they isolate China from the rest of the Asian landmass. In this setting, it was easy for China to think of itself as the true center of civilization, the so-called Middle Kingdom.

Original Document



As China's population grew, it found ways to use every available acre of land productively. The terraced hillside in Photo 3A illustrates this dramatically. Such terracing can keep land from eroding and washing away. Photo 3B shows how uncontrollable China's rivers can be and how easily they can wash away fertile soil. The photo makes clear why the Chinese called this river the Huang-He, or "Yellow River." Truly catastrophic floods on this river and the Yangtze often resulted in tens of thousands of deaths or more. Floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters reached an enormous scale several times in China's history. This may explain why such destructive events came to be seen as signs of the approaching fall of a dynasty.

Original Document



3A



3B

Original document sources: Public domain via Wikimedia Commons
© Leruswing / CC BY-SA 3.0

During the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE), changes in land-holding practices made it hard for the government to collect the taxes it needed. Taxation was always a challenge for China's imperial government. It was also often a key cause of peasant unrest and rebellion. In 780 CE, an official named Yang Yan recommended a new system of taxation. This excerpt from his proposal describes some of the problems he hoped to solve.

Original Document

Very little of the tax revenue that should have gone to the emperor was actually presented. Altogether there were several hundred kinds of taxation: those that had been formally abolished were never dropped, and those that duplicated others were never eliminated. Old and new taxes piled up, and there seemed to be no limit to them. The people drained the last drop of their blood and marrow; they sold their loved ones. . . . Rich people with many able-bodied adults in their families sought to obtain exemption from labor services by having them become officials, students, Buddhist monks, and Daoist priests. The poor had nothing they could get into [to obtain such an exemption] and continued to be registered as able-bodied adults liable to labor service. The upper class had their taxes forgiven, while the lower class had their taxes increased. Thereupon the empire was ruined and in distress, and the people wandered around like vagrants.

Adapted Version

The emperor received very little of the tax revenue that should have gone to him. Altogether, there were several hundred kinds of taxation. Some that had been officially abolished were actually never dropped. Some that duplicated other taxes were never eliminated. Old and new taxes piled up. There seemed to be no limit to them. The people were drained of the last drop of their blood and marrow. They sold their loved ones into slavery to pay what they owed. Rich people with many able-bodied adults in their families could get excused from labor services by having those adults become officials, students, Buddhist monks, and Daoist priests. The poor had no way to obtain such exemptions. They continued to be registered as able-bodied adults who owed labor service. The upper class had their taxes forgiven, while the lower class had their taxes increased. As a result, the empire was ruined and in distress, and the people wandered around like vagrants.

Original document source: William Theodore De Bary and Irene Bloom, eds., Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume 1: From Earliest Times to 1600 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 554.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

3.5

The Panthay Rebellion

Throughout China's history, many large and violent peasant uprisings have occurred. Some have led to the fall of dynasties. Others were suppressed, often in a very brutal fashion. In the mid-1800s, several rebellions broke out at about the same time. They came at a time when taxes and rents were rising, peasants were deserting their lands, and the Ming Dynasty was under attack for its corruption and weakness. One massive revolt was the Taiping Rebellion, an uprising of a Christian sect from 1850 to 1864. Another was the mainly Muslim Panthay Rebellion. These uprisings together resulted in tens of millions of deaths. They did not lead to the overthrow of the Ming Dynasty, but they weakened it greatly. That dynasty, China's last, ended in 1911. This painting illustrates one bloody incident in the Panthay Rebellion.

Original Document

Original document source: Battle of the Panthay Rebellion (1856–1873), from *Victory over the Muslims*, a set of twelve paintings. Circa 1890, Palace Museum, Beijing.

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

3.6

The Mandate of Heaven

In the concept of the Mandate of Heaven, "Heaven" was not a personal god but a universal spiritual power. It is this Heaven that gives China's emperor the right to rule. In this document, a chief minister named Yi Yin expresses the idea of the Mandate. Here, Yi Yin is advising a young Shang king just after the former king died. The passage is from the *Shu Jing*, (the *Book of Historical Documents*). The *Shu Jing* is one of five Confucian classics used in the education system of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). The book itself is much older than that. Much of its "history" is probably a mixture of fact and legend.

Original Document

Oh! Of old the former kings of Xia cultivated earnestly their virtue, and then there were no calamities from Heaven. The spirits of the hills and rivers likewise were all in tranquility; and the birds and beasts, the fishes and tortoises, all enjoyed their existence according to their nature. But their descendant did not follow their example, and great Heaven sent down calamities, employing the agency of our ruler [Zheng Tang] who was in possession of its favoring appointment. . . . Our king of Shang brilliantly displayed his sagely prowess; for oppression he substituted his generous gentleness; and the millions of the people gave him their hearts. Now your Majesty is entering on the inheritance of his virtue;—all depends on how you commence your reign. To set up love, it is for you to love your relations; to set up respect, it is for you to respect your elders. The commencement is in the family and the state. . . .

. . . The ways of Heaven are not invariable;—on the good-doer it sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer it sends down all miseries. Do you but be virtuous, be it in small things or in large, and the myriad regions will have cause for rejoicing. If you not be virtuous, be it in large things or in small, it will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple.

CONTINUED

Adapted Version

Oh! The former kings of Xia cultivated their virtue earnestly, and there were no calamities from Heaven. The spirits of the hills and rivers were tranquil as well; and the birds and beasts, the fishes and tortoises, all enjoyed their existence according to what was natural to them. Their descendants did not follow their example, and great Heaven sent down calamities, employing the power of our ruler, Zheng Tang, who possessed Heaven's favor. Our king of Shang brilliantly displayed his wisdom; for oppression, he substituted his generous gentleness; and the millions of people gave him their hearts. Now your Majesty is entering on the inheritance of his virtue;—everything depends on how you begin your reign. To set up love, if it is up to you to love your relations; to set up respect, it is up to you to respect your elders. The commencement is in the family and the state.

The ways of Heaven are not unchangeable;—on the good-doer it sends down all blessings, and on the evil-doer it sends down all miseries. Be virtuous, in small things or in large, and the various regions will have cause for rejoicing. If you are not virtuous, in large things or in small, it will bring the ruin of your ancestral temple.

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

3.7

Confucius on the Well-Ordered Kingdom

Confucius is thought to have been born in 551 BCE, though historians are not sure about this. His views came to influence China's educated classes and leaders for many centuries.

Original Document

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.

Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed. Their States being rightly governed, the whole empire was made tranquil and happy.

From the Son of Heaven down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of everything besides.

Original document source: *The Four Books: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and the Works of Mencius*, translated by James Legge (China: Commercial Press, 1893).

Mencius was a Confucian philosopher who is thought to have lived from 372 to 289 BCE. He is considered by many to be Confucius's most important and faithful follower. In this passage, he tries to explain why it is wiser and more effective for a ruler to act benevolently.

Original Document

Now, if Your Majesty will institute a government whose action shall all be benevolent, this will cause all the officers in the empire to wish to stand in Your Majesty's court, and the farmers all to wish to plow in Your Majesty's fields, and the merchants, both traveling and stationary, all to wish to store their goods in Your Majesty's market places, and traveling strangers all to wish to make their tours on Your Majesty's roads, and all throughout the empire who feel aggrieved by their rulers to wish to come and complain to Your Majesty. And when they are so bent, who will be able to keep them back? . . .

They are only men of education, who, without a certain livelihood, are able to maintain a fixed heart. As to the people, if they have not a certain livelihood, it follows that they will not have a fixed heart. And if they have not a fixed heart, there is nothing which they will not do, in the way of self-abandonment, of moral deflection, of depravity, and of wild license. When they thus have been involved in crime, to follow them up and punish them;—this is to entrap the people. How can such a thing as entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man?

Therefore, an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people, so as to make sure that, above, they shall have sufficient wherewith to serve their parents, and, below, sufficient wherewith to support their wives and children; that in good years they shall always be abundantly satisfied, and that in bad years they shall escape the danger of perishing. After this he may urge them, and they will proceed to what is good, for in this case the people will follow after that with ease.

CONTINUED

Adapted Version

Now if your Majesty's government acts benevolently, all of your officials will be proud to stand with you. The farmers will all wish to plough in your Majesty's fields. The merchants, both travelling and stationary, will all wish to store their goods in your Majesty's market places. Traveling strangers will all wish to travel on your Majesty's roads. And all throughout the empire who feel aggrieved by ruling princes or nobles will wish to come and complain to your Majesty. When they feel this way, who will be able to keep them back?

Only well-educated men can maintain a fixed and steady heart even when they do not have any certain livelihood. As to the ordinary people, if they have no certain livelihood, they will not have a fixed heart. And if they lack a fixed heart, there is nothing they will not do in the way of self-abandonment, moral deflection, depravity, and wild license. When they become involved in crime, to simply punish them is to entrap them. How can entrapping the people be done under the rule of a benevolent man?

Therefore, an intelligent ruler will regulate the livelihood of the people. He will do this above all to make sure they have enough to serve their parents, who are above them, and to support their wives and children, who are below them. In good years they will always be abundantly satisfied; in bad years they will at least not be in danger of perishing. After this, he may urge them to do what is good. And they will proceed to what is good. For in this case, the people will follow after their ruler with ease.

Original document source: *The Four Books: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and the Works of Mencius*, translated by James Legge (China: Commercial Press, 1893).

Confucian philosophers taught that an emperor earned the Mandate of Heaven by ruling benevolently and by following the rituals of ancient Chinese tradition. In reality, many emperors ruled in a far more ruthless way. Legalism was a school of thought that at least some of these emperors found more to their liking. One who did was the founder of the Qin Dynasty, Emperor Shihuangdi. He was the first to fully unify all of China. One legalist scholar who lived just before this Qin unification was Han Feizi (280–233 BCE).

Original Document

When a sage rules the state, he does not depend on people's doing good of themselves; he sees to it that they are not allowed to do what is bad. If he depends on people's doing good of themselves, then within his borders, he can count less than ten instances of success. But if he sees to it that they are not allowed to do what is bad, then the whole state can be brought to a uniform level of order. Those who rule must employ measures that will be effective with the majority and discard those that will be effective with only a few. Therefore they devote themselves not to virtue but to law. . . .

The enlightened ruler works with facts and discards useless theories. He does not talk about deeds of benevolence and righteousness, and he does not listen to the words of scholars. Nowadays, those who do not understand how to govern invariably say, "You must win the hearts of the people!" If you could assure good government merely by winning the hearts of the people, then there would be no need for men like Yi Yin and Kuan Chung [famous wise statesmen]—you could simply listen to what the people say. The reason you cannot rely upon the wisdom of the people is that they have the minds of little children.

PRIMARY SOURCE ▶

3.10

Shihuangdi's Terracotta Army

Qin emperor Shihuangdi did not accept Confucian teachings. His rule fit more with the legalist philosophy. Through military conquest, he greatly expanded the size of his nation. He ruled ruthlessly in many other ways. For example, he ordered hundreds of thousands to work on major projects such as linking together parts of the Great Wall. His famous mausoleum reflects his martial spirit well. It is filled with an entire terracotta army of six thousand warriors. Their purpose was to protect the emperor in the afterlife. These soldiers are shown in this photograph.

Original Document



Original document source: © Jmhullot / CC BY 3.0.

Communicating Results and Taking Action

Communicating Results

- ◆ Confucius once said this about government: *“Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The relation between superiors and inferiors is like that between the wind and the grass. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it.”* Write a long letter to Confucius commenting on this passage. In the letter, you must refer in detail to at least three of the primary sources for this lesson in explaining your views about this quotation.
- ◆ Compose a set of letters exchanged by Confucius, Mencius, and Han Feizi in which they discuss with one another the true meaning of the idea of the Mandate of Heaven. The letters should make detailed comments on Primary Sources 3.7, 3.8, and 3.9.
- ◆ Separate into small groups. Each group’s task is to learn more about one large peasant uprising in China’s past. Your group should develop a presentation on this uprising using PowerPoint or some other presentation software. The presentation should include references to at least Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, and 3.10, as well as any others your group feels are relevant. Share your presentation with the class.

Taking Action

- ◆ Use PowerPoint or other presentation software to create a tourists’ overview of the Forbidden City. Find photographs and diagrams of the entire compound of palaces and halls. Include information on the Meridian Gate, the Gate of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Medium Harmony, the Hall of Protective Harmony, the Hall of Heavenly Peace, the Hall of Union and Peace, and the Hall of Earthly Peace—and any other features that should be a part of the tour. Include brief written descriptions of these features and explain their purpose in the overall plan of the Forbidden City. The overall theme of the presentation should be to explain how the Forbidden City reflects the traditional Chinese view of the emperor as the “Son of Heaven” ruling according to the Mandate of Heaven.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, use social media to share the presentation with others. Invite people contacted in this way to comment and offer their own thoughts about the Forbidden City and the ideas the presentation expresses.

The Mandate of Heaven Rubric

Criteria	Unacceptable	Developing	Proficient	Excellent
Focus	Tries to respond to task instructions but lacks clear focus on a central idea or thesis	Addresses the task instructions adequately but focus on a central idea or thesis is uneven	Responds to the task instructions appropriately and convincingly; has a consistent focus on a central idea or thesis	Responds to all task instructions convincingly; has a clear and strong focus on a well-developed central idea or thesis
Research	Refers to some sources but fails to connect these in a relevant way to the task instructions	Refers to relevant sources well but does not always connect these clearly to the task instructions	Refers to relevant sources accurately and usually connects these to the task instructions and a central idea	Refers to relevant sources accurately and in great detail and connects these clearly to the task instructions and a central idea
Development and Use of Evidence	Uses some details and evidence from sources but does not make clear the relevance to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources generally but not always in support of a clear focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources in a way that effectively supports a focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources along with clear explanations demonstrating deep understanding of the task purpose or instructions
Content	Refers to disciplinary content without clearly understanding it or while using it in an irrelevant or inaccurate manner	Refers to disciplinary content with some understanding but not always with a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Accurately uses disciplinary content and demonstrates a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Uses disciplinary content effectively and explains thoroughly and in-depth its relation to the overall task
Conventions	Demonstrates only limited control of standard English conventions, with many errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and other conventions	Demonstrates some command of standard English conventions with limited errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates adequate command of standard English conventions with few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions with few errors and a use of language appropriate to the audience and the purpose of the task

Primary Source Bibliography

3.1: 1-A, © Daniel Case / CC BY-SA 3.0

1-B, © DF08 / CC BY-SA 3.0

3.2: © Nystrom Education

3.3: 3-A, Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

3-B, © Leruswing / CC BY-SA 3.0

3.4: De Bary, William Theodore, and Irene Cohen, eds. *Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume 1: From Earliest Times to 1600*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

3.5: Battle of the Panthay Rebellion (1856–1873), from *Victory over the Muslims*, a set of twelve paintings. Circa 1890, Palace Museum, Beijing.

3.6: Ganty, Denis, and Walter D. Ward. *A History of World Societies, Volume 1 to 1600*. Boston: Bedford/St Martin's, 2012.

3.7: *The Four Books: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and the Works of Mencius*. Trans. James Legge. China: Commercial Press, 1893.

3.8: *The Four Books: Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and the Works of Mencius*. Trans. James Legge. China: Commercial Press, 1893.

3.9: Han Fei Tzu. *Basic Writings*. Trans. Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.

3.10: © Jmhullot / CC BY 3.0



Sources for Further Study

Sonneborn, Liz. *Ancient China*. New York: Children's Press, 2012.

Ting, Renee, ed. *Chinese History Stories Volume 1: Stories from the Zhou Dynasty*. Walnut Creek, CA: Shen's Books, 2009.

———. *Chinese History Stories Volume 2: Stories from the Imperial Era*. Walnut Creek, CA: Shen's Books, 2009.

Yomtov, Nel. *China*. New York: Children's Press, 2017.