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Balancing China's Economic Rise with Human Rights: **European and Canadian Positions**



Source: <http://www.japanfocus.org/-ming-wan/2576> and <http://www.directitservices.ca/cccmac/>

COURSES:

Canadian and World Politics (CPW4U)
Analysing Current Economic Issues (CIA4U)
Canadian and World Issues: A Geographic Analysis (CGW4U)
Canadian and International Law (CLN4U)

TIME REQUIREMENTS:

One of the provided lesson plans: 75 minutes (one class period)
Both of the provided lesson plans: 150 minutes (two class periods)

DESCRIPTION:

Since initiating major political and economic reforms in the late 1970s, China has witnessed the most spectacular rates of economic growth in world history. It has become a key player in global trade, but human rights issues remain a major concern for many of China's economic partners. This lesson has been created to help students understand the ways in which other countries have reacted to China's economic rise. Looking specifically at the responses by Canada and the European Union, the lesson engages students on the complexities of balancing economic considerations with human rights issues in a relationship with China.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this lesson plan will depend on a variety of factors. If the students have already done a lesson on modern Chinese history, you may want to tailor the presentation to leave some sections out. **Feel free to pick and choose topics from the handouts you feel fit your class more than others.**

The following themes will be covered:

- Modern Chinese history and understanding the economic rise of China since the 1970s
- Basic economic concepts, such as supply and demand, GDP, exports and imports
- Three major economic systems (command, market, and market socialist economies) and their features
- Understanding the different economies of Canada and the European Union countries, and how this affects their policies towards China
- Economic connections between China, the EU, and Canada
- Basic human right concepts, such as value systems, and civil, political, and economic rights
- Various definitions and interpretations of human rights
- Human rights issues in China and the responses to these by Canada and the European Union
- Recognizing the weight economic ties and considerations have on the attempts to improve levels of basic human rights in a country

MATERIALS: (8 documents total)

- Teacher's Guide (below)
- Teacher's Attachment and Bibliographic References
- Student handouts: (**Note:** you may want to tailor the material you cover in your class. In this case, feel free to pick and choose which material from the handouts you would like to use, and which material would be for your reference only)
 - Handout A: Key economic terms and historical context
 - Handout B: Three economic systems and their features
 - Handout C: China's economic rise
 - Handout D: Key human rights terms and interpretation of human rights
 - Handout E: Human rights issues in China
 - Handout F: Human rights and economic power

TEACHER'S GUIDE:

The following guidelines are to assist in delivering the material in this lesson plan. They are meant to have a certain amount of flexibility, to account for the amount of time available in the class, as well as to offer the option of a more classroom- or homework-focused approach.

There are several ways to adopt this lesson plan for use in the classroom, depending on how much time you have available:

1. **Lesson Plan 1:** Historical and economic focus (one class)
2. **Lesson Plan 2:** Human rights focus (one class)
3. **Lesson Plan 3:** Focus on both economics and human rights (two classes)

Procedure for Lesson Plan 1: Economic focus (75 minutes)

Handouts recommended:

- Handout A
- Handout B
- Handout C
- Handout F

1. **Begin by giving Handout A to students.** These will provide students with key historical and economic themes and background. Give students a few minutes to look over the handout and engage them with the definitions. (*10 minutes*)
2. **Video clip:** If you have access to a projector and the internet, you may begin by showing your students a video. There is an introductory video to the 'China Rises' program, which lasts about 2 minutes. You can also explore different topics within this CBC 'China Rises' miniseries, especially the 'Introduction' and 'Economy' sections. (*5 minutes*) <http://www.cbc.ca/chinarises/intro/index.html>
3. **Teachers lead students in the Opening Discussion on China's recent history.** For this, direct students to Handout A. You may want to include more background on Chinese history if this is your focus. (*10 minutes*)
4. **Teachers then can lead students through a discussion on economic systems or Chinese's economic rise.** Students refer to Handout B and Handout C. (*30 minutes*)

Key concepts to highlight in this section are:

- a. Pros and cons of all three economic systems. You may want to divide the class into three groups, one for each economic system, and have them report to the rest of the class through paraphrasing the major features, benefits, and drawbacks of their assigned economic system.
- b. The factors affecting Chinese economic growth.
- c. Introducing students to concepts such as FDI and international trade and how they affect relations between countries.

You may want to further tailor which sections of these handouts you will look at with your students according to the requirements of your own class.

5. **Skip to Handout F and the EU's and Canada's relationships with China.** This ties together how Canada and the EU have approached economics and human rights in their relations with China. (*20 minutes*)

Be sure to leave time for discussion which will arise from discussing the questions at the end of each handout.

Procedure for Lesson Plan 2: Human rights focus (75 minutes)

Handouts recommended:

- Handout D
 - Handout E
 - Handout F
1. **Video clip:** If you have access to a projector and the internet, you may begin by showing your students a video. There is an introductory video to the ‘China Rises’ program, which lasts about 2 minutes. You can also explore different topics within this CBC ‘China Rises’ miniseries, especially the ‘Introduction’ and ‘Society’ sections. (5 minutes) <http://www.cbc.ca/chinarises/intro/index.html>
 2. **Begin by asking students what they think of when they hear the term ‘human rights.’** Have students discuss their pre-conceived notions of human rights amongst themselves and the class before providing handout D. You may want to split the class into groups for this. (5 minutes)
 3. **Provide students with Handout D.** Look at the terms and definitions provided as well as the human rights overview section. Ask students if the information in Handout D is much different than what they perceive human rights to encompass. Complete the handout and look at the questions to stimulate discussion on what the students think about the various definitions of human rights provided. (15 minutes)
 4. **Follow this discussion by giving out and discussing Handout E.** Look at the human rights issues selected in this handout. You may want to split the class into groups, with one group focussing on one specific issue, and then paraphrase the situation in China and the EU and Canadian response to the rest of the class. You also may want to provide some background on China before discussing Handout E, in which case you can provide parts of Handout A as supplementary material. (15 minutes)
 5. **Continue onto Handout F.** Have students read and analyze EU and Canadian positions on China. Be sure to leave time for discussion which will arise from discussing the questions at the end of each handout. (15 minutes)
 6. **Hold a three-way debate (optional).** Split the class into 3 groups, representing the EU, China, and Canada, and have them act as if they were negotiating at an international conference. You can then set ‘victory’ conditions for each group, for example, the Canadian group might win if they achieve closer economic relations with China and get China to regard them as more equal partners, the EU group might want to also improve economic ties with China but also affect human rights within China, and China might want to project its economic power to Canada and the EU but have neither of them interfere in matters of internal sovereignty. All countries can win if concessions are made and are flexible negotiators, but all three countries may lose if no agreement is reached. You be the judge! (15-20 minutes)

Procedure for Lesson Plan 3: Focus on economics and human rights (150 minutes
(two class periods))

Handouts recommended:

- All handouts

1. Do both Lesson Plans 1 and 2.

- a. Look at Lesson Plan 1 for the first class; consult the Teacher's Attachment for ideas about homework or assignments to give the students after completing Lesson 1 and before starting Lesson 2.
- b. Be sure to include lots of intra-class discussion. Look at ideas from lesson plan 2 on creating discussion groups and holding a mini-debate.
- c. You may also want to explore the CBC series 'China Rises' further and use that at different points within the lesson.