



## **Philosophical Foundations in Education: This is How We Do It...Philosophy, Policy and Our Isms**

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
(Social Studies, Individuals & Society 6th)

**Keywords:** (Philosophy, philosophers, critical thinking, Legalism, Confucius, Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Taoism, Yin, Yang, Ancient China, Ancient Greece, World History, Ancient River Valley Civilizations)

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit

**Synopsis:** What if? What if students began to question more about the past and the world around them? What if they make more real life connections to what they study in history? To encourage students to think like a philosopher and incorporate the concept of philosophy into our curriculum is a tremendous value. The benefit of having students think more deeply about the world around them and see the connections of the past to the present makes it relevant. We want to engage students and teach them how to have better, more philosophical conversation and use more critical thinking skills. Over the course of this CU on philosophy and its impact on Ancient Civilizations and our own lives, students will have the opportunity to think like a philosopher and to delve deeper into the impact of different philosophers and philosophies and on the daily lives of ancient peoples and features of their society. Students will have the opportunity to learn about more modern day philosophies and the effect on our society. Finally, students can look at who they are and what philosophies that they live by or would like to live by in their daily lives.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 85 students in **Individuals & Society, or Social Studies, 6th grade.***

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## Philosophical Foundations in Education: This is How We Do It...Philosophy, Policy and Our Isms

### INTRODUCTION

#### Rationale

As an IB school, our Social Studies discipline is actually “Individual and Societies”. According to the IB Programme, I & S <sup>1</sup>“encourages learners to respect and understand the world around them and equips them with the necessary skills to inquire into historical, contemporary, geographical, political, social, economic, religious, technological and cultural factors that have an impact on individuals, societies and environments.” Local and global contexts are very important to the I&S curriculum as well. “This unit is designed using the IB framework and aligns with IB Criteria and the new NC Social Studies Standards as well as the CMS Social Studies Curriculum.

Often students will voice their opinion about studying history. That question is why? “Why are we studying these civilizations?” That does not mean that they do not believe that the topic is interesting, just that they do not understand the why. What and how does it affect them? What relevance does it have to their lives? According to “Thinking and the School Curriculum” “All too often, students see no connection between what they are studying and what they do in their lives, and what society at large does.”<sup>2</sup> These factors must be brought together in a **meaningful way in order for children to begin to have a conception of themselves as social and political beings.**<sup>3</sup> That is why having students understand the connection between philosophies of the era and all aspects of the society and are able to make those connections to today is extremely important. “Thinking and the School Curriculum” also suggests that content made more sense for students when they could see a connection between different subjects. <sup>4</sup> This is very much the goal of IB and should be for every teacher who teaches history.

In our curriculum, we do study innovations, inventions, elements of civilizations such as writing systems, art and architecture which connect to their other subjects, such as science, math, art and ELA for example. This unit will focus on a historical analysis of philosophies and philosophers in the ancient cultures that we study in 6th grade Social Studies. While students will learn about some philosophers as part of the curriculum, it is more about using the critical thinking skills to think like a philosopher. Students will explore the facts about the civilizations and determine what problems they were trying to solve.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/individuals-and-societies/>

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp and Frederick S. Oscanyan “Thinking and the School Curriculum.” Book. In *Philosophy in Education*. Temple University Press, n.d.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp and Frederick S. Oscanyan

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

## Demographics

Albemarle Road Middle School/IB Academy, an IB Magnet School of Excellence. We are a partial magnet, with 10% of our student population in the IB program, however, we teach the IB curriculum to all students. Our school has a total of 1080 students. Our racial breakdown is 48.5% Latino, 36.2% African American, 7.4% Asian, 5.9% white, 1.7% Two or more races, .02% Pacific Islander, 0.1% Native American. The percentage of our school population that is economically disadvantaged is 44.5% We are a Title 1 School.

## IB Goals

*Our Statement of Inquiry for our IB program (we are a partial magnet but teach as a full magnet) for our River Valley Civilizations is*

*River Valley Civilizations: Principles and discoveries influence communities in the development of civilizations, innovations and revolutions.*

*Classical Civilizations: Systems and innovations guide government and civil societies.*

*Philosophy shaped civilizations, policies and individuals, as an IB school, we focus on having engaging class discussions that relate content topics to what is going on in our world today. Students can look at how philosophies change and how it shapes our world and our “isms.”*

*I believe that this completed CU will also be able to be modified for other disciplines such as art, architecture, religion, music, and other core classes.*

## Goals/Objectives

My goal for this unit is to encourage students to think like a philosopher and to create a community of philosophical inquiry. There are four features of a Community of Philosophical Inquiry<sup>5</sup>. The first feature is to build meaning with a philosophical question<sup>6</sup>. This can be practiced with a philosophical question to “hook” the interest of students and generate deeper, meaningful discussions. The second feature of a CPI is “epistemological (how do we know what we know?<sup>7</sup>) modesty” (we recognize that we are fallible).. I think this is similar to having students “thinking about their thinking”<sup>8</sup>, which is a metacognition strategy to help students understand more about how they think and act in order to gain a deeper understanding.. Another

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<sup>5</sup> The Community of Philosophical Inquiry (chapter 5 from Philosophy in Education)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/8-pathways-metacognition-in-classroom-marilyn-price-mitchell>

feature of a CPI is that it doesn't need to rely on philosophical knowledge<sup>9</sup>, in other words refrain from using philosophical terminology or have students use information from a specific philosopher to make their point. The goal in this unit is to teach about great philosophers and philosophies of Ancient China and Ancient Greece. Students thinking like a philosopher doesn't mean they have to use philosophical terms. The fourth feature of creating a CPI is to create an "Intellectually Safe Environment" for students to be challenged and to have their input valued<sup>10</sup>.

Creating a CPI will be central to incorporating philosophy into lessons about Ancient China and Ancient Greece. I want students to understand how philosophies affected these ancient civilizations and evaluate their continuing impact. Ultimately, students will be able to make a connection to philosophies that people have today. In our curriculum, we learn about major philosophers and their philosophies. This unit will allow students to develop a deeper understanding of how philosophy impacts society by learning to think like a philosopher themselves. .

**Critical Thinking will be an integral part of this unit.** Critical thinking is defined as "..... self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. People who think critically consistently attempt to live rationally, reasonably, empathically"<sup>11</sup> Critical thinking solves a problem. Students will be able to answer and generate questions about what problems were trying to be solved throughout history. There will be an emphasis on the philosophical views of the civilizations that we study which begins with Prehistory, then to River Valley Civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, West Africa), then the Classical Civilizations of Greece and Rome. Why did the ancient civilizations think the way they did and how did their questions influence their world? What answers to problems were they trying to answer?

The new Social Studies Standards Middle Grades has an Inquiry Band, which focuses on students to develop the ability to construct compelling questions, supporting questions, gathering and evaluating sources, developing claims and using evidence and communicating those ideas. The final band is taking informed action. From the standards, "...**the intent is that by the end of grade 8 students will have been exposed to the skills essential to developing critical thinking skills in social studies.**" While a philosophical approach does not necessarily mean that there is an exact correct answer, students will have to formulate their opinion based on the information they have learned.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>

For example, we can start with a quote from Confucius "In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of."<sup>12</sup>

What does this quote mean? After a discussion, students can determine whether or not they agree with the quote. Students can discuss what poverty is and what wealth means. This is an excellent quote to compare to today. Students can look up information about the most wealthy in the US or analyze a graph which shows the disparity in income. As they discuss what it means today, they can determine what the leaders thought about that quote. What impact does that philosophy have on that society? Confucius thought that leaders should be benevolent to their subjects to instill loyalty. What impact did that philosophy have on that society during that time? What was that civilization like during the time that Confucius philosophy was followed? Confucianism was the most popular during the Han Dynasty, often considered the Golden Age. Obviously, when considering the effects of these philosophies, a timeline of when they were prevalent will be necessary to help students organize the philosophies with the era. How does that compare with Legalism in Ancient China which emphasized that subjects couldn't be trusted to do the right thing, so they had to be afraid to do the wrong thing? How did philosophy help? Were there times it hurt a civilization? How about today? Philosophy shaped civilizations, policies and individuals. Students will discuss how and why.

Then, as another example, compare the philosophy of Confucius with philosopher Han Feizi, who developed Legalism. This philosophy is centered around the belief that people cannot be trusted to do the right thing, so they must be afraid to do the wrong thing. Students will brainstorm to think about how and if the philosophy of legalism is still being practiced and was in our more modern history. One example that comes to mind are the Jim Crow Laws. Obviously, legalism is prevalent in many religions, but I do not intend to discuss that, unless students bring that up specifically.

Students can explore who the rulers were during the times these philosophies were practiced and what their impact was on society. Taoism is another Chinese philosophy which can be included in this unit. This unit will also focus on philosophers in Ancient Greece. There are plenty of similarities between some of the Ancient Chinese and Ancient Greek philosophies, especially on politics and government.<sup>13</sup> Each of these philosophies left their mark on their society and continue to the present day. The elements of a civilizations are Government, Religion, Achievements, Politics, Economy and Social Structure (G.R.A.P.E.S) are all influenced by the philosophers of their time.

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<sup>12</sup> "Confucius Quotes." BrainyQuote. Xplore. Accessed December 2, 2021.  
[https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/confucius\\_136380](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/confucius_136380).

<sup>13</sup> Long, Qihan. "A Comparison between Ancient Greek and Chinese Philosophy on Politics." *Proceedings of the 2018 3rd International Conference on Modern Management, Education Technology, and Social Science (MMETSS 2018)*, 2018.  
<https://doi.org/10.2991/mmetss-18.2018.89>.

**Questions and comparisons:** How did philosophy help shape their view of the world around them? Can this help students make sense of the world around them by understanding how philosophy(ies) shapes justice, politics, social structures, innovations, religions and economies in our world today.

## CONTENT RESEARCH

As Cicero stated, “To now know what happened before one was born is to be a child.”<sup>14</sup> I believe this is an important idea because it tells how important it is for everyone to learn about what happened in the world in the past. Quite often Social Studies is considered secondary to disciplines such as Math and Language Arts. This is not a fair assessment because Social Studies was developed to be a humanizing core for curriculum, connecting daily, living experiences for students to global issues and problems in their world. To achieve this imagination is important as well as emotional engagement. Students need to care to help make it real. This resource suggested planning lessons as telling a story about the person, event, civilization<sup>15</sup>. One activity that we currently do which helps students understand how Buddhism was born is the E! TrueHollywood Story of Siddhartha Guatama, of course, it is just the story of his life presented in that way. Siddhartha was a prince and lived a sheltered but rich life in the palace. It had been foretold that if he stayed in the palace, he would grow up to be a great ruler, but if he left the palace, he would become a great religious leader. Siddhartha left the palace and saw so much suffering that he wanted to end suffering for others. That is how Buddhism began. I think that it is a good point about presenting the material as a narrative about the philosopher. With a better understanding of the philosopher, students can find deeper meaning into the effect of that philosophy. Can students relate to how a philosophy might negatively or positively affect the daily lives of ancient peoples? A way in which children make sense of the world is to look at opposites. Interesting that this is similar to the Yin and the Yang, which is part of Taoism in Chinese philosophy. Taoism significantly impacted Ancient Chinese Culture from the Shang Dynasty forward and was state religion during the Tang Dynasty. The main philosophy of Taoism is “the recognition that all things and all people are connected is expressed in the development of the arts, which reflect the people's understanding of their place in the universe and their obligation to each other.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Wineburg, Samuel S. “Chapter 2 The Psychology of Teaching and Learning History.” Essay. In *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple U.P., 2001

<sup>15</sup> Egan, Kieran, and Gillian Judson. “Values and Imagination in Teaching: With a Special Focus on Social Studies.” *Educational philosophy and theory* 41.2 (2009): 126–140. Web

<sup>16</sup> Mark, Emily. “Taoism.” *World History Encyclopedia*. World History Encyclopedia, October 24, 2021. <https://www.worldhistory.org/Taoism/>

Studies show that students shouldn't be given the impression that things could not be other than they are, this is a way to ask the what if, or even why to encourage deeper and engaging discussions<sup>17</sup>. This goes to students also being able to develop questions that help them make sense of their place in the world and connections they can make to ancient civilizations. Another point of discussion from <sup>18</sup>“Thinking and the School Curriculum” was that it made more sense for students if they saw the connection between disciplines. When looking at achievements in ancient civilizations, the connections between science (inventions, astrology), mathematics and literature. Also, I'll add this quote from the same text in our reading, **“All too often, students see no connection between what they are studying and what they do in their lives, and what society at large does.”**<sup>19</sup> I included this quote in the content section but it warrants special consideration for a unit that deals with the impact of philosophy on society and vice versa. This concept opens the door to great philosophical discussions in the classroom, based on “What if...?” What if this had happened instead...” or Why did this event happen? Students analyzing the cultural revolutions and looking at the courage and sacrifices of people living in those times is something that can be emotionally charged and allow them to put themselves in the place of regular people, therefore making history more real and relevant to them <sup>20</sup>. Students will be encouraged to come up with their own questions about the content in order to have engaging student-led discussions. Constructing questions that allow students to explore how a historical event might be different if \_\_\_\_\_ had happened. <sup>21</sup>

Students need to have more opportunities to read historical passages and understand the context as well as biases that influence the writing of the text. It seems that often students do not understand these influences and it's important for them to develop that skill. This is certainly an important skill for students (or anyone) to develop as there is often so much biased and propaganda type information presented as fact. Strategies such as mock readings, think alouds and picturing the past are effective for students to understand the content and context. Studying history is much more engaging and beneficial for students when they “not only learn factual information but how to use it to craft their own interconnected historical investigations.”<sup>22</sup> Short primary sources are excellent to use for this purpose.

“Teaching through quotes” was a pedagogical strategy mentioned during the Plato: Teaching Philosophy to High School Students Seminar. Quotes are excellent resources for students to find in addition to having them provided by the teacher. Using an interesting and engaging quote is an excellent start to a philosophical discussion. A quote can be used as the prompt for a CPI

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<sup>17</sup> Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp and Frederick S. Oscanyan

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Egan, Kieran, and Gillian Judson. “Values and Imagination in Teaching: With a Special Focus on Social Studies.” *Educational philosophy and theory* 41.2 (2009): 126–140. Web

<sup>21</sup> Wineburg, Samuel S. “Chapter 2 The Psychology of Teaching and Learning History.” Essay. In *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple U.P., 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

(Community of Philosophical Inquiry” Discussions. After a prompt is presented, there should be time for reflection, then the opportunity for students to ask questions about the prompt, then the discussion and finally, closure or an end to the discussion.<sup>23</sup> These are the five parts of a CPI, which are necessary for a structured, yet philosophical discussion that is student centered.

I feel it is important to see the connection between excellent social studies practices and how they connect with philosophy in education. Such is the case with the aforementioned imagination as being an engaging addition to curriculum, “The ability to think of the possible also suggests a flexibility of mind that can operate in all our thinking.”<sup>24</sup> This is something that every person should have the ability and desire to do, especially helpful for students to grow into adults with critical thinking skills.

Here are a few interesting quotes that connect to the Social Studies curriculum and the meaning of philosophy.

“Good philosophy expands your imagination.”<sup>25</sup>

"Think of philosophy as the sound of humanity trying to recover from the crisis."<sup>26</sup> Think of the significance of this quote. What crisis throughout history did philosophy try to fix?

"Once a long time ago, our ancestors were animals and did what came naturally, later acquired the capabilities to ask questions, "Why things happened"<sup>27</sup>

Socrates defined a philosopher as a seeker of the truth. Plato constantly questioned everything. Aristotle had a very defined view of government as he divided the forms of government into three true forms: kingly rule, aristocracy with constitutional government<sup>28</sup> All of these quotes can lead to very interesting questions from students, so they can “Think like a Philosopher”, or ask questions like Socrates. Then, not only are they participating in philosophical thinking, they are also understanding what philosophy is and who some of the great philosophers were. There is quite a bit of similarity between Ancient Chinese and Ancient Greece philosophies in their vision of politics and government. Both believed that virtue, harmony and music were very important. However, that does not always seem evident in every dynasty or society in those

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<sup>23</sup> The Community of Philosophical Inquiry (chapter 5 from Philosophy in Education)

<sup>24</sup> Egan, Kieran, and Gillian Judson. “Values and Imagination in Teaching: With a Special Focus on Social Studies.” *Educational philosophy and theory* 41.2 (2009): 126–140. Web

<sup>25</sup> Craig, Edward. *Philosophy a Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. pg 3

<sup>26</sup> Craig, Edward. *Philosophy a Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. pg 5

<sup>27</sup> Craig, Edward. *Philosophy a Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. pg 5

<sup>28</sup> Long, Qihan. “A Comparison between Ancient Greek and Chinese Philosophy on Politics.” *Proceedings of the 2018 3rd International Conference on Modern Management, Education Technology, and Social Science (MMETSS 2018)*, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.2991/mmetss-18.2018.89>.

civilizations. “... the ideas of Western and Eastern philosophers resonated with each other and formed the brightest light in human history.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Legalism, Confucianism, Taoism, Greek Philosophers**

This is where students will use critical thinking skills to delve deeper into Ancient China and Ancient Greece when we study those civilizations. Students will look at problems that they were trying to solve and have opportunities to ask questions then engage in meaningful classroom philosophical discussions.

The Qin Dynasty lasted fourteen years, yet it had a lasting impact. Emperor Qin is famously known for making the TerraCotta Soldiers to protect him in the afterlife. This can lead to an interesting philosophical topic about why a leader would think they needed an army in death. The philosophy of Legalism will be somewhat of a guiding lesson to help students understand the connection between philosophy and the impact on society. After learning what Confucianism and Taoism is then students will focus on the impact of those philosophies on people, government, innovations and other features of civilizations.

### **How have these philosophies from ancient times influenced our society?**

How do we connect these ancient philosophies to today? Interestingly, Both Greek and Chinese philosophers emphasized the importance of harmony, virtue and music in politics.<sup>30</sup> That is a topic that is relevant for today and definitely engaging to students. This would not be presented as a political discussion as in this party versus that, maybe just the chaos that ensues with harmony and virtue. Of course, those are concepts that would need to be discussed. To be honest, my students love to have anime used as an example and I think that could be used to make a point on politics that would lead to a deeper discussion.

**This unit also allows students to investigate modern philosophies. For this part, the philosophers are not important, the focus is on the philosophies and how they affect us now. What makes us who we are and how we live. Using an “ism” offers students the opportunity to describe what makes us who we are by what we believe or our philosophies. Some philosophies may be from ancient times but are prevalent today.**

What are our “isms”? How do we describe societies? Materialism, Realism, Liberalism, Conservatism, Individualism, Humanism, Legalism, Confucianism, Taoism, etc. to name a few. We can’t forget the isms that the Greeks gave in trying to help people during their times. For example, stoicism and accepting fate, I think that this philosophy describes the Spartans, slaves and gladiators fairly well. The Greeks offered step by step ways to increase happiness. Think Epicureanism, Stoicism, Skepticism, and Cynicism<sup>31</sup>. Sharing the definition of Epicureanism, a life of luxury, the opposite of the Middle Way of Buddhism and Taoism, or how the Spartans can

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<sup>29</sup> Long, Qihan. “A Comparison between Ancient Greek and Chinese Philosophy on Politics.” <https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/mmetss-18/25905148>

<sup>30</sup>Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Sejin. “Ch 1: The Meaning of Life, from Great Issues in Philosophy, by James Fieser.” Ch 1: THE MEANING OF LIFE, From Great Issues in Philosophy, by James Fieser, September 16, 2018. <https://www.utm.edu/staff/jfieser/class/120/1-meaning.htm>

be described as very “stoic.” For example, how did Stoicism Philosophy impact the lifestyle of Spartan society? We actually use the term “Spartan Existence” to mean a very sparse lifestyle. Thinking about the “ism” that was predominant in the society, is a way for a student to describe it in short, hashtag short of way, a closure of sorts. I chose this as part of my title as a way to not only look at the past but also analyze philosophies of today. Who could ever forget “Material Girl” by Madonna? That song was definitely a song and sign of the times. Students will have the opportunity to explore a philosophy that is relevant or popular today. Finally, students can determine what their own philosophy about life is, based on their understanding of past philosophers and philosophies.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Teaching Strategies**

Alphaboxes: A chart with every letter in the alphabet for students to use to record vocabulary words or to summarize a text.

Big Paper/ Silent Conversation: This is a great idea to use as an anticipatory guide. It allows students to share their thoughts as well as read their peers’ ideas as well. They can also agree or disagree (respectfully) and add comments.

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/big-paper-silent-conversation>

Cartoons/Memes-These offer a great way to relate content to students in a fun, engaging way.

Class Discussion-Students need to support their opinion on any class discussion. Why do I think that?

CPI Discussion- “A Community of Philosophical Inquiry) follows the following format:

A Prompt: this can be a prompt written by students or by the teacher.

Time for Reflection: Students need to have time to gather their thoughts to engage in a meaningful discussion

Questions about the prompt: Students should have questions about the prompt, which will lead to more questions and deeper discussions. Supporting Questions I.1.2 Construct supporting questions based upon disciplinary concepts.

The Discussion: Using sentence starters and setting the ground rules for your CPI discussion is an excellent way to encourage students to feel safe, comfortable and engaged. This is not an exercise in being correct, but in furthering questions and discussion. Developing Claims and Using Evidence I.1.5 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple

perspectives. I.1.6 Construct claims and counterclaims using evidence while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both based on multiple sources.

Some form of Closure: Students can write an exit ticket about an important point they learned, identify an idea they liked, a Tweet form for them to write something they learned (this can also be used on Twitter if you have a class Twitter account).

Free Write/Respond to Prompt or Quote-I Feel that students writing their thoughts about a topic is an excellent way to have students organize their thoughts and provide evidence to support their opinion.

Games: Quizlet and Quizlet Live, Gimkit, Kahoot, Blooket all are great to use as formative assessments. Students can also create their own game to share with their classmates.

#Hashtags: Using hashtags to summarize is a strategy we use quite often because it's fun and resonates with students. If you have a class Twitter feed, you can actually have them submit their hashtags there.

"I see, I think, I wonder.." Students use this strategy to analyze illustrations, memes, cartoons or some type of visual used for the lesson.

Jamboard/Padlet: these platforms allow students to share their ideas as well as reading what their peers have written. They can also react to a classmates' comment or respond in writing.

Journal writing: Students really learn to understand a concept or cause and effect by writing a journal entry as if they were in that civilization.

Quotes-I have found that students love to look up quotes by famous historical figures that we study. Often they notice that those quotes are still relevant today.

Question Matrix: An important skill is for students to learn how to ask questions. They should also learn and identify the different levels of questions. Providing opportunities for students to ask questions and record them on a matrix allows them to see the level of questioning. By using a matrix, students can determine the level of their questioning.

Shape Up Review-This is a nice, visual summary tool that allows students to organize their thoughts about a topic.

StoryboardThat: This is a great platform for students to write down their thoughts in a very creative way.

Visuals, Illustrations, Graphs

"What if?...." Questioning strategy in having students consider possibilities in past events in history.

Whiteboard Discussions: Students can respond to a prompt on a whiteboard then share their response by holding up the whiteboard.

## **Classroom Lessons/ Activities**

### ***Preteaching: Preparing for philosophical thinking.***

6th Grade Social Studies, Individuals & Society and/or World History, offer opportunities to have students begin to philosophically think about questions. This CU will focus on Ancient

China and Ancient Greek philosophers and philosophies, but there are other lessons that offer an introduction to the concept. Here are two ideas to begin with, prior to introducing what the term “philosophy” means and the CPI format. Presenting information about Hammurabi’s Code (Is it Just?) and the story of Siddhartha Guatama and the birth of Buddhism will be great reference points when discussing philosophers and philosophy.

Here is a brief outline of what will be taught and an approximate time frame. This part should be able to be completed in two consecutive days. This comes during the study of Mesopotamia. and is part of the curriculum that comes before the CU unit that will focus on philosophies and their impact on civilizations.

This first part will include pre teaching lessons which can be referred to as we go through the unit. In other words, we will engage in questions that are philosophical in nature but not specifically talk about philosophy. Later, these examples can be referenced and built upon to help students understand the concept of philosophy. One question that we do study prior to these units is “What is justice?” and is Hammurabi’s Code Fair and Just<sup>[SM2]</sup> We discuss how these laws give us an idea of what was important during that period of time in Babylon. The DBQ Online Program has students answer the question, “What is justice?” and use primary source documents of Hammurabi Code to support their opinion. I mention this because it is an excellent introduction to have students evaluate a historical document that we still hear about today (“An Eye for an Eye” comes from Hammurabi’s Code) and a concept that is so relevant today.

.Hammurabi’s Code was the first written and posted laws, developed by King Hammurabi of Babylon. Some laws seem very just and caring, such as

**Law 148:**

If a man has married a wife and a disease has seized her, if he is determined to marry a second wife, he shall marry her. He shall not divorce the wife whom the disease has seized. She shall dwell in the house they have built together, and he shall maintain her as long as she lives. However, there are laws that are much more harsh, such as Law 195: If a son has struck his father, his hands shall be cut off.

**Hammurabi’s Code Lesson:**

**6.C&G. 1.4 Compare the evolution of laws and legal systems in various civilizations, empires, and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas .**

Quickwrite or Do Now: Where do we get our values from individually and in a society? Students will have 5 minutes to write about where they think. After students have had the chance to write their thoughts, a class discussion will give students the opportunity to share their ideas in a class discussion.

An engaging way to introduce Hammurabi’s Code: Have you ever heard this quote? This quote is often attributed to the Old Testament but actually is a quote from Hammurabi.

"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

Where do you think it originated?

What does it mean?

A second philosophical question to discuss Hammurabi's Code is what does it mean to be fair and just? The district has provided two scenarios to look at "What is justice?" These two scenarios are provided in the CMS Social Studies Module for Mesopotamia. This offers a great opportunity to critically analyze the concept of justice, compare it with the different laws written by Hammurabi and comparisons to injustices today. Some of those punishments are very harsh, but so are sentences where people of color spent decades in jail for very minor offences.

### **I.1.8 Construct responses to supporting and opposing perspectives supported by evidence.**

#### **Task 1:**

With a partner, talk through the two cases below and discuss the questions that follow. In each case, you will consider justice in three ways: Is the outcome fair to the accused? Is the outcome fair to the victim? Is the outcome in the best interest of the general society?

#### **Case A:**

Eddie is caught shoplifting a cell phone at Best Buy. Eddie is 15 years old. It is a first offense. The police call his parents, and Eddie returns the phone. There will be no criminal record. In judging whether this is a fair handling of the case, ask:

Is it fair to Eddie?

Is it fair to Best Buy?

Is it fair to society? Is it in the best interest of society?

#### **Case B:**

J.D. is caught shoplifting a cell phone at Best Buy. J.D. is 19 years old. This will be his third felony conviction, all for shoplifting. Because of the Three Strikes law, his state requires that he serve a minimum of ten years in prison with no chance of parole.

In judging whether this is a fair handling of the case, ask:

Is it fair to J.D.?

Is it fair to Best Buy?

Is it fair to society? Is it in the best interest of society?

Can you think of a law or rule that is unfair?

As students work together to answer the questions, it's an opportunity to add other scenarios to the equation by asking about White Collar Crimes, of people who steal hundreds of thousands of dollars with little or no consequences. Also, they can research the types of crimes that prisoners have committed and are serving time for as a result of the three strikes. Are there people who are serving longer sentences due to relatively minor crimes versus those who have committed more violent or major offenses?

Reflection: Do laws of a society reflect their values? Think of laws such as Stand Your Ground, Citizens Arrest and the consequences of those types of laws,

As students explore how philosophies affect civilizations, it will be important for students to determine whether or not Hammurabi's Code was actually just and fair. Hammurabi and his

subjects believed that he was chosen by the god Shamesh and that the laws were given to him by the god. Therefore, the laws were infallible. The importance of Hammurabi's Code is that it was primarily considered the first written set of laws that was displayed for everyone to know the laws. Hammurabi's Code was a blueprint even to our own modern laws.

Some of Hammurabi's laws were very fair, some were very harsh and cruel.

A few of the laws that students can use to consider the impact of Hammurabi's Code.

Hammurabi's Code # 229 If a builder builds a house for someone, and does not construct it properly, and the house which he built falls in and kills its owner, then that builder shall be put to death.

Hammurabi's Code # 195: If a son strikes his father, his hands shall be hewn (cut) off.

Hammurabi's Code # 143: If the woman has not been careful but has gadded about, neglecting her house and belittling her husband, they shall throw that woman into the water

Hammurabi's Code # 117:

If a man be in debt and is unable to pay his creditors, he shall sell his wife, son, or daughter, or bind them over to service. For three years they shall work in the houses of their purchaser or master; in the fourth year they shall be given their freedom.

Students can look at the impact of Hammurabi's Code on the Babylonians.

***Preteaching: Siddhartha Guatama & Buddhism (this is taught during our Indus Valley part of Ancient River Valley Civilizations)***

It was foretold that if Saddartha Guatama never left the palace, he would become a great king. If he did leave the palace, then he would become a great religious leader. Siddartha did leave the palace and saw the suffering of his people. Siddhartha developed the philosophy that desire led to suffering. He tried many different ways to stop the suffering of his people. He tried denying himself food and other things, but that did not help relieve suffering. He then began the philosophy of "the middle way". This philosophy came to be the religion of "Buddhism".

Do Now or Quick Write:

6.B.1.1 Explain how religion, tradition, and cultural practice influence the development of civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Copy the following quote in your notebook: "All things appear and disappear because of the concurrence of causes and conditions. Nothing ever exists entirely alone; everything is in relation to everything else."

— Gautama Buddha <sup>32</sup>

What do you think this quote means? How can you rewrite the quote in your own words?

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<sup>32</sup> "A Quote by Gautama Buddha." Goodreads. Goodreads. Accessed November 24, 2021. <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/59840-all-things-appear-and-disappear-because-of-the-concurrence-of>.

Do you agree or disagree? Why? Why not?

What do you think that “the middle way” means?

Lesson on Buddhism and students write their rules for living their own Eightfold Path.

What do you think the subjects of Siddhartha thought about this philosophy?

Using quotes, students will research and find a quote from Siddhartha.

Students will look at the impact of the religion of Buddhism. At this point, Hinduism should have been taught and students can compare and contrast the two religions of India. Although the focus of this Curriculum Unit is Ancient China and Ancient Greece, this is an important lesson for students to look to understand the impact of philosophy on culture.

### ***Curriculum Unit***

The first part of this Curriculum Unit is to introduce students to philosophy. In the middle grade level, it's likely that students have not heard the term, or may not know the meaning.

#### ***Day 1 What is philosophy?***

This part of the Curriculum Unit is to introduce students to philosophy. In the middle grade level, it's likely that students have not heard the term or may not know the meaning. As they have already begun to think philosophically (guided) in the pre teaching part of this Curriculum Unit, referencing these can be helpful in helping students understand about philosophy.

Question: What do you think the word “philosophy” means? Use the following visual example or a different visual that includes some type of philosophy.

Students have a chance to ask questions based on the following visual:



This represents “optimism”. Optimism means that you look at things with a positive attitude and make the best of a situation. Here is an opportunity to introduce the concept of asking “What if?”. What if he had an opposite philosophy of life? What might the caption say? What might his expression look like? Can you find a meme about “pessimism”?

To students: “ism” is a suffix which means, according to Merriam-Webster, the act, practice, or process of doing something. This is important for students to understand because as they form

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<sup>33</sup> <https://Quotesgram.com/Phil-Dunphy-Quotes-Lemonade/>.

their ideas of what a philosophy is they can state it in a way that makes sense to them.

### Big Paper/Silent Gallery Discussion

The following questions are put on a large piece of paper (butcher block, posters, etc.) and then placed on the floor. Markers should be on top of each paper. One question is written in large letters on each paper. Students should be put into five groups, then directed to write their answers on the large paper, along with reasoning for their answers. Set a timer for about 7 minutes for each question, then direct student groups to move to the next set.

1. Is our government working?
2. What does it mean to be beautiful?
3. What makes something music?
4. Who is the most important person in your classroom?
5. Should asking some questions be against the law?<sup>34</sup>

Explain to students that these are the types of questions that philosophers might ask. Then put the papers on the wall or on a desk and have students silently walk around and read the responses.

Closure: Which question was the most interesting to you? What do you think philosophy means? Students can #hashtag their thoughts.

### ***Day 2 Introduce our goal for Philosophy in the Classroom***

This unit starts with a question. Begin by framing the question that we will be investigating throughout the unit.

**\*“What or how did following this philosophy affect the civilization at that particular space and time?”**

We'll be looking at which philosophy had more of an effect on civilization in that space and time. Ultimately, we will look at a modern day philosophy and you will choose the effect of certain philosophies that we see today.

This lesson on Legalism will be a guiding lesson for students to look at the impact and importance of philosophy on a society or civilization.

Legalism: This lesson should take approximately two days to complete.

Do Now/Warm up Question: How would it look in the classroom if your teacher thought that you and the entire class would never follow directions or do work in class?

Ten Minute Philosophical conversation: Are people naturally good or naturally bad?

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<sup>34</sup> White, David A. *Philosophy for Kids: 40 Fun Questions That Help You Wonder about Everything!* Routledge, n.d.

Hans Fei thought that people were too stupid or corrupt to do the right thing. They had to be afraid to do the wrong thing.

The definition of Legalism is that the interest of the ruling class is much more important than the interest of the common people. Legalists want a strong, central government with absolute power over its citizens. They achieve this by having extremely harsh laws and punishments.

Connection to government/society: First Emperor Qin was a legalist. He accomplished much during his reign. He united China, in part by implementing standardized writing. He built the great wall, organized a system of weights and measures. He established laws that were the same for all people. However, he was a cruel leader. It was illegal to whine about Qin's government. If you said that things could improve, you could be put to death. Emperor Qin was a legalist and ran his dynasty with absolute control and extreme and harsh punishment.<sup>35</sup>

Poll students: Do you think that's true? Is the fear of punishment the biggest motivator?

How would it make you feel if that was the primary philosophy today?

What if...Emperor Qin didn't subscribe to the Legalism Philosophy, would like had been different? How?

Students will be given information about civilization during that time and will determine the impact of Legalism in Ancient China. Do you think Legalism has existed in our society? Provide primary documents of legalism

"During the Qin Dynasty any books which did not support the Legalist philosophy were burned and writers, philosophers, and teachers of other philosophies were executed."<sup>36</sup> Students can answer what they think of this happening and how/why the philosophy of Legalism resulted. Have students write questions about this quote and the impact on Ancient China Civilization at that time.

Make it relevant: Does this happen in our society? At this point, students can do a Google Search and find evidence of this today and in recent history. There have been news stories about books being banned from school libraries. For example, there are 850 books that a Texas Lawmaker wants to ban in 2021. Reference some of the discussion of the scenarios we discussed prior to teaching about Hammurabi's Code. Laws that allow citizens to arrest other citizens, or Stand your Ground, etc. Can these harsh laws and sentences be connected to the philosophy of "legalism" and extreme government control? What about voting rights and the new laws being implemented in many states?

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<sup>35</sup> "Qin Dynastyancient China for Kids." The Qin Dynasty - Ancient China for Kids. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://china.mrdonn.org/qin.html>.

<sup>36</sup> Mark, Emily. "Legalism." World History Encyclopedia. World History Encyclopedia, November 17, 2021. <https://www.worldhistory.org/Legalism/>.

Two points that can be discussed regarding Emperor Qin's effect on their civilization is that he weakened teachers and scholars by only allowing books about medicine, agriculture, etc. He wanted people to grow food and not waste time. People who broke this law may have ended up as part of the Great Wall of China. He also gave peasants the choice of two occupations; farming or to harvest silk. If they did something else then they would be executed.<sup>37</sup>

Emperor Qin died after drinking a potion to make him immortal. Before he died, he created an army of TerraCotta Soldiers. I like to use a clip of the movie "Mummy 2: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor", which has the Terracotta Warriors that come alive. Why do you think he felt he needed an army to protect him after death?

I see...I think....I wonder



Journal: Write as a peasant in Ancient China during the rule of Emperor Qin. Describe what your life is like based on your understanding of Legalism and the Qin Dynasty.

Closure: Legalism & Emperor Qin Shape Up Review-Students complete information based on their thoughts of today's lesson.

### ***Confucianism Beliefs and Teachings***

**I.1.5 Identify evidence that draws information from multiple perspectives.**

**I.1.10 Identify challenges and opportunities created in addressing local, state, tribal, regional, national, and/or global issues**

Do Now/Warm-up/Quick Write

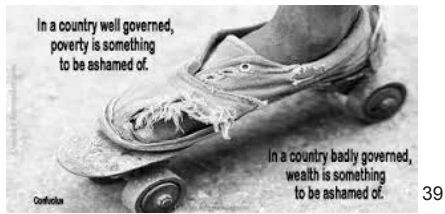
Show one of the two visuals: The quote can be covered or used with a puzzle maker, just using

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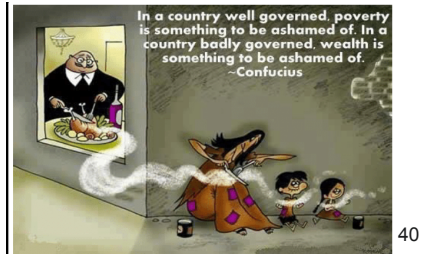
<sup>37</sup> "Donn, Lin. "Qin Dynastyancient China for Kids." The Qin Dynasty - Ancient China for Kids. Accessed November 18, 2021. <https://china.mrdonn.org/qin.html>.

<sup>38</sup> Magazine, Smithsonian. "Terra Cotta Soldiers on the March." Smithsonian.com. Smithsonian Institution, July 1, 2009. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/terra-cotta-soldiers-on-the-march-30942673/>.

the visual for students to analyze.



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Write the following quote in your notebook. "In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of." <sup>41</sup>  
Confucius

Agree/Disagree? Why

### **CPI discussion on this quote.**

Give students time to reflect, that can be completed as they write the quote and put in their own words.

Give students time to come up with questions about the quote.

Have a meaningful discussion with students where they share their opinion and support their thoughts.

Closure: Can they find an example of this in life today?

### **Who was Confucius?**

**6.B.1.1 Explain how religion, tradition, and cultural practice influence the development of civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.**

[Who was Confucius? - Bryan W. Van Norden](#)

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<sup>39</sup> <https://quotes2remember.Com/Quotes/3360>.

<sup>40</sup> "In a Country Well Governed Poverty Is Something to Be Ashamed Of." Anonymous ART of Revolution. Accessed November 24, 2021.

<https://www.anonymousartofrevolution.com/2013/02/in-country-well-governed-poverty-is.html>.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

### Questions from watching the video:

1. Where did Confucius believe that human character was formed?
2. What did Confucius try to dissuade rulers from using?
3. Did Confucius think the family was more important or the state?
4. What example was in the video?
5. Do you agree? Should the son have turned in the father?
6. What does the quote “Do not inflict upon others that which you yourself would not want”.

Confucianism is a system of beliefs based on the teachings of Kong Fu Zi, later called Confucius, who lived in China from 551 to 479 B.C. He believed that a ruler should be benevolent towards his subjects and there should be mutual respect and peace between subjects and rulers. He suggested that every person has a role in society and that social peace would be achieved only after each person learned their place in society, displayed compassion for others, and became aware of their own conscience (inner thoughts).<sup>42</sup>

Han Dynasty Emperor Wu Di made Confucianism the state philosophy.<sup>43</sup> Students can research other Ancient Chinese Emperors who supported Confucianism,.

What was the Han Dynasty like? How did this philosophy affect Ancient Chinese society at that time?

Students will research the Han Dynasty and the effect of Confucianism.

How can you compare and contrast Legalism and Confucianism and the effect on their civilizations? (Venn Diagram) Use Legalism in one circle and Confucianism in the other.

They can research more information to put in their compare and contrast.

Legalism is more of a guided lesson so this is an opportunity for students to research Confucianism in Ancient China.

What impact did the philosophy of Confucianism have on Ancient Chinese Civilization?

What “ism” or #hashtag can you use?

What if?....Someone like Confucius didn’t have a philosophy different from Legalism?

### Taoism/Daoism

#### **6.B.1.1 Explain how religion, tradition, and cultural practice influence the development of civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.**

Do Now: Draw this symbol in your notebook and label it Yin and Yang Symbol. What do you notice about this symbol? What do you think it means?

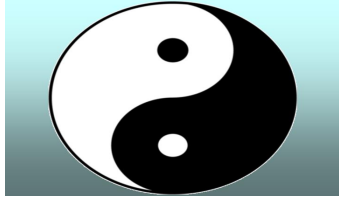
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<sup>42</sup> “Confucius - Journey to China.” Google Sites. Accessed November 20, 2021.

<https://sites.google.com/a/fullerton.edu/journey-to-china/lesson-plans/chinese-philosophy/confucius>.

<sup>43</sup> National Geographic Society. “Confucianism.” National Geographic Society, July 7, 2020.

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/confucianism/>.



The principle of Yin and Yang is that all things exist as inseparable and contradictory opposites, for example, female-male, dark-light and old-young.<sup>44</sup> What opposites can you think of? Think about The Justice League, how would you categorize those themes? (Good vs. Evil)

**He who obtains has little. He who scatters has much.**<sup>45</sup>

What do you think this proverb means? Write this quote and have students respond in writing or discussion. Have them put this in their own words to ensure they understand the meaning.

Taoism, sometimes referred to as Daoism, is a Chinese philosophy attributed to Lao Tzu (c. 500 BCE). This philosophy was very popular in the rural areas of Ancient China and was a type of folk religion. Taoism became the predominant philosophy or religion during the Tang Dynasty. It emphasizes doing what is natural and "going with the flow" in accordance with the Tao (or Dao), a cosmic force which flows through all things and binds and releases them.<sup>46</sup>

Video Clip: What elements of Taoism are evidenced in the clip? Does it remind you of any other religions? How might you "ism" this in a hashtag? (ex. "Go with the flowism")

### **Summarizing Ancient China Philosophy**

**6.H.1.1 Explain the role various events, people, and groups played in the rise, fall, and transformation of societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.**

Students will analyze primary source documents on Ancient Chinese Philosophies.

[Partner Philosophies \(1\).doc](#)

Closure:

**6.C&G.1.1 Compare the structures of governmental systems in civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.**

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<sup>44</sup> Cartwright, Mark. "Yin and Yang." World History Encyclopedia. World History Encyclopedia, November 20, 2021. [https://www.worldhistory.org/Yin\\_and\\_Yang/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Yin_and_Yang/).

<sup>45</sup> Fong, Wing Gig. "“He Who Obtains Has Little. He Who Scatters Has Much.”--Lao-Tzu, 6th Century B.C. Chinese Moralist and Mystic, on Generosity. from the Series Great Ideas." Smithsonian American Art Museum. Accessed November 27, 2021. <https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/he-who-obtains-has-little-he-who-scatters-has-much-lao-tzu-6th-century-bc-chinese-moralist>.

<sup>46</sup> Mark, Emily. "Taoism." World History Encyclopedia. World History Encyclopedia, November 26, 2021. <https://www.worldhistory.org/Taoism/>.

Students will complete a GRAPES Graphic Organizer and note the impact of Legalism, Confucianism and Taoism on different elements of civilization.

[GRAPES of Civilization Graphic Organizer](#)

### ***Greek Philosophers***

Now we will look at Greek Philosophers and their impact on society. This will focus on Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. We also learn about Alexander the Great in our Social Studies Unit. It is not included in this CU but can easily be incorporated.

[Ancient Greek Philosophy](#) This video is an excellent introduction to Greek philosophy.

Students will read an introductory text on Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. As they read, they will record information that stands out to them on an Alphabox Graphic Organizer.

Students will Think, Pair, Share so that they can explain why they completed the Alphaboxes as they did and have the opportunity to hear the opinion of their peers. Then they will brainstorm to come up with a list of questions that they have after their reading by using a Question Matrix so they can think of different levels of questions and explore the most important and engaging ones to them.

[2021 Great Greeks\\_ The Philosophers.docx](#)

[Introduction to Greek Philosophers Alphaboxes Sheet](#)

### **Socrates**

**6.H.1.1 Explain the role various events, people, and groups played in the rise, fall, and transformation of societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.**

Relevant Connect to Our Society: Amendment I

What does our constitution say about Free Speech? Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

What does “Free Speech” mean?

Why is it important?

Does it mean you can say anything? Here are examples of times where people have used the excuse of “freedom of speech” but suffered the consequences of hate speech or inappropriate speech and lost their jobs. Students can ask questions like Socrates and create a list of questions about free speech. What might “free speech” have to do with Socrates?

I see....I think....I wonder

Students will analyze the painting of “The Death of Socrates”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> “Death of Socrates,” n.d. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436105>.



The “I Wonder” questions can be recorded on a poster, whiteboard or smartboard

399 BCE: The Trial of Socrates

Why was Socrates put on trial?<sup>48</sup>

What did Socrates say that made him such a threat? He taught his students to question everything, the government, gods and goddesses, and that made him a threat. Students can use the website to find out more information about why the authorities turned against Socrates and sentenced him to death.

Find a quote from Socrates and put it on a Jamboard or Padlet.

Think like Socrates. Ask questions. What questions do you have about Socrates, his philosophy or being on trial? How did his ideas affect his society? What kind of questions did Socrates ask?

## Plato

### **6.B.1.1 Explain how religion, tradition, and cultural practice influence the development of civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.**

Quote: "If you do not take an interest in the affairs of your government, then you are doomed to live under the rule of fools."

Agree or Disagree? Can you support your opinion with an example?

Why do you think that Plato said this? Let's find out. This is an opportunity for students to use Google to try to find information about Plato.

Write a paragraph, based on your thoughts about the quote. Write as one person who agrees with the quote and one person disagreeing with the quote. Here are two sentence starters, for example:  
You should take an interest in what goes on in your government because \_\_\_\_\_.  
It's not important to take an interest because \_\_\_\_\_.

Plato wrote in an interesting, new style called a “dialogue”. He would write about two characters having a discussion on a topic by asking each other questions. In doing so, he could explore different sides to an argument and use it to explain new ideas. Sometimes, Plato would use his

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<sup>48</sup> “Biography.” Ducksters. Accessed November 27, 2021.

[https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient\\_greece/socrates.php](https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient_greece/socrates.php).

teacher Socrates in his dialogues.<sup>49</sup> We would consider dialogue as having a conversation with someone.

Tell the story of Phaethon: Phaethon grew tired of being teased by his classmates over his parentage. The son of Zeus and many other Greek gods and goddesses bragged about their parents. Phaethon was the son of Apollo (sometimes Helios, The Sun God). His mother confirmed this and he traveled to the Sun Palace to confront his father. Apollo was very happy and promised to give him anything he'd like. Phaethon thought about this and decided he would like to drive the Sun Chariot. Apollo knew that was not possible because even Zeus himself could not control the horses and the Sun Chariot. He tried to talk Phaethon out of that because, being a god, he could not go back on his word. Phaethon could not be dissuaded and refused to listen to the advice of his father. When he went out with the Sun Chariot, it was a disaster. He could not control the horses and they flew too far away from the earth, freezing it and then too close, burning the earth and making the Sahara desert. Poseidon tried to stop him by making a huge wave but still Phaethon continued until Zeus ended it with a lightning bolt. Then Phaethon fell to earth. Questions that students can think, pair, share while working on their dialogues, can be:

- Was Apollo right for telling Phaethon he could have anything in his power?
- Should someone not be able to go back on their word, even if it's dangerous? As an example, if a student's parent or guardian said they could have anything for their birthday and they asked to be able to drive a car to a store, even though they are not old enough to drive, what should happen?
- Should Phaethon have listened to his father?

Students can determine what lessons can be learned from this myth. Then they write a dialogue which explains the ways that Apollo was responsible for the disaster and how Phaethon himself was.

### **6.H.1.3 Compare multiple perspectives of various historical events in civilizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas using primary and secondary sources.**

**Is a “philosopher-king” a good idea? Yes or no? Part of the 6th Grade World History also focuses on Alexander the Great, who was to some degree and “Philosopher King.” Why do you think Plato thought a philosopher-king was a good idea?**

Stoicism-Have students research the word. How did this philosophy impact the Spartans in Ancient Rome (students can research). What does the phrase “living a Spartan lifestyle” mean? Students should understand that it is a minimalist lifestyle. There are people today who are minimalist. What is the opposite of that philosophy? Here students research Alexander the Great-was he like a Philosopher-King, using primary and secondary sources? Why or why not?

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<sup>49</sup> “Biography.” Ducksters. Accessed November 22, 2021.  
[https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient\\_greece/plato.php](https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient_greece/plato.php).

### **6.H.1.1 Explain the role various events, people, and groups played in the rise, fall, and transformation of societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.**

Using Plato's Dialogue concept, students will write a dialogue between three philosophers that they have learned about in this unit. This exercise will demonstrate student understanding of the philosophers, philosophies and the impact on their society. This dialogue must include the following elements:

Differentiation: This can be completed as an individual or group assignment.

It can be presented orally as well as written.

1. The dialogue must contain a quote from at least three philosophers that we have studied in this unit. This quote should demonstrate the philosophy that they are known for and should include a short explanation.
2. Each philosopher should ask questions about what the other philosopher was quoted as saying.
3. Each philosopher should make a comment about what their philosophy is.
4. Each philosopher should make a statement about their impact on their society.
5. Each philosopher should ask at least one question.

Example:

Students asked to write a conversation between three philosophers, such as Han Fei, Confucius and Plato. What are they quoted as saying? What questions might they ask another philosopher? What would they believe their impact on their society was? Would they believe their philosophy was superior to the others? This dialogue (or conversation) should exhibit their basic understanding of the philosopher, philosophy and impact on civilizations.

### **Modern Philosophies**

### **6.B.1.2 Explain how artistic expressions reflect the values of civilizations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.**

Introduce Materialism. Do you know what that is? Have students look up the definition.

Partial Madonna lyrics, Material Girl (You could also play the music video)



They can beg and they can plead

But they can't see the light (that's right)  
'Cause the boy with the cold hard cash  
Is always Mister Right

'Cause we are living in a material world  
And I am a material girl  
You know that we are living in a material world  
And I am a material girl<sup>50</sup>

What does that mean? How would you # this philosophy? How do you think it impacted our society?

What was the impact of Materialism in the 80's and the Yuppie lifestyle? Think about songs that were popular, television shows, movies. What counter movements were going on?



Based on this photo, what can you infer about the people featured?

The term “Yuppies” was coined in the 1980s, and was used to be a negative term for young business people who were very materialistic business people. They were considered arrogant, undeservedly wealthy and fairly obnoxious and condescending to others deemed a lower social class. “Yuppies tend to be educated with high-paying jobs, and they live in or near large cities.”<sup>52</sup>

Cause and effect: What was the effect of that philosophy on society? Students will do research. Additional support, show the video of Madonna singing Material Girl or display part of the lyrics. Students might determine that greed was a motivating factor by many people during that time. Can they think of ways that this philosophy might have impacted our society today? Some students might look at how these excesses may have hurt the environment or taken attention

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<sup>50</sup> “Material Girl.” Madonna - Material Girl Lyrics | Lyrics.com. Accessed November 28, 2021. <https://www.lyrics.com/lyric/2813013/Madonna/Material+Girl>.

<sup>51</sup> <https://80sactual.blogspot.com/2015/10/the-history-of-yuppie-word.html>.

<sup>52</sup> Halton, Clay. “What Is a Yuppie?” Investopedia. Investopedia, November 20, 2021. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/y/yuppie.asp#:~:text=Coined%20in%20the%201980s%2C%20the,%2C%20undeservedly%20wealthy%2C%20and%20obnoxious.&text=Yuppies%20tend%20to%20be%20educated,in%20or%20near%20large%20cities>. Feb 28, 2021”

away from it. They may think that while others were extremely wealthy that poverty was a huge problem. How would you “ism” this? Hashtag? The movie “Scrooged” is a good example of juxtapositioning the excesses of the very wealthy with the very poor.

## **Assessment**

### **Supporting Questions I.1.2 Construct supporting questions based upon disciplinary concepts**

Throughout this unit, there are opportunities to assess students understanding of the impact of philosophy on civilizations through learning experiences. This culminating project is to assess their understanding of the concept of philosophy by creating or finding one that they can identify with and describing it through pop culture.

### **Culminating Project, Reflective:**

What’s your philosophy? What’s your “ism”? What is your philosophy on life?

### **GRASP**

**Goal: Create a philosophy that describes your life.**

**Role: A philosopher**

**Audience: Other students with whom you’d like to share your philosophy**

**Situation: You’ve learned about Ancient Philosophers, participated in philosophical conversations and looked at the impact of philosophy on society. You have been asked to create a philosophy that will appeal to your peers.**

**Product: A poster or Canva collage, which explains your philosophy.**

### **This is how I do it....**

### **Guiding questions:**

Has there been a philosophy similar to mine? Students can investigate different philosophies beyond the ones discussed in this unit.

What items or ideas reflect my philosophy?

What type of art would represent my philosophy?

What type of dance?

What type of school-appropriate music?

Are there any celebrities who exhibit this philosophy?

What type of questions might be important to ask?

What do I wonder about?

What issues concern me?

For your Canvas or product, include different items, ideas, art, photos that help describe your philosophy. Each submission should include the following:

- \*Philosophy name
- \*Artwork that reflects the philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.
- \*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)
- \*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.
- \*A quote (can be original or one found).
- \*Compelling questions and issues.
- \*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?

Students will write a paragraph explaining their philosophy, why they chose that specific philosophy and how their ideas reflect it.

This assessment should reflect students' comprehension of philosophy and its impact on society.

### **Criterion: Thinking critically**

#### **Maximum: 8**

*At the end of year 1, students should be able to:*

.identify the main points of a personal philosophy using the following descriptors:

- \*Philosophy name
- \*Artwork that reflects philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.
- \*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)
- \*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.
- \*A quote (can be original or one found).
- \*Compelling questions and issues.
- \*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?

<b>Achievement level</b>	<b>Level descriptor</b>
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>The student:</p> <p><b>. identifies</b> the name of the philosophy and main points by using 1-2 of the following descriptors.</p> <p>*Artwork that reflects philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)</li> <li>*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.</li> <li>*A quote (can be original or one found).</li> <li>*Compelling questions and issues.</li> <li>*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?</li> </ul>
3–4	<p>The student:</p> <p><b>i. identifies</b> the name of the philosophy and main points by using 2-3 of the following descriptors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Artwork that reflects philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.</li> <li>*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)</li> <li>*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.</li> <li>*A quote (can be original or one found).</li> <li>*Compelling questions and issues.</li> <li>*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?</li> </ul>
5–6	<p>The student:</p> <p><b>i. identifies</b> the name of the philosophy and main points by using 4-5 of the following descriptors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Artwork that reflects philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.</li> <li>*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)</li> <li>*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.</li> <li>*A quote (can be original or one found).</li> <li>*Compelling questions and issues.</li> <li>*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?</li> </ul>
7–8	<p>The student:</p> <p>.Identifies in detail the main points of their philosophy, including the name and ideas,, visual representation and other forms of pop culture by using all of the descriptors listed to explain their philosophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Artwork that reflects philosophy. This can be a painting, photo, illustration, meme, or a different visual.</li> <li>*Art that reflects this particular philosophy (examples, dance, food, culture, etc.)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*A song or piece of music that accurately reflects their philosophy.</li> <li>*A quote (can be original or one found).</li> <li>*Compelling questions and issues.</li> <li>*What kind of impact will (or does) this philosophy have on society?</li> </ul>
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## **Appendix 1: NC 2021 6th Grade Social Studies Standards**

### **Inquiry 6-8**

Note: The Inquiry Strand is a content-neutral strand that focuses on the skills necessary for students to improve their critical thinking. The Inquiry Strand comes first in the standards document because the skills outlined can and should be applied within all content in the course.

The content strands are arranged alphabetically, and each represents a different social studies lens through which students should access the content. (per the new standards.)

**I.1.1** Construct a compelling question through a disciplinary lens individually and with peers.

**I.1.2** Construct supporting questions based upon disciplinary concepts.

**I.1.5** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple perspectives.

**I.1.6** Construct claims and counterclaims using evidence while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both based on multiple sources.

**I.1.10** Identify challenges and opportunities created in addressing local, state, tribal, regional, national, and/or global issues.

### **Behavioral Sciences**

**6.B.1.1** Explain how religion, tradition, and cultural practice influence the development of civilizations and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

**6.B.1.2** Explain how artistic expressions reflect the values of civilizations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

### **Civics and Government**

**6.C&G. 1.2** Compare how different types of governments maintain power and authority.

**6.C&G. 1.4** Compare the evolution of laws and legal systems in various civilizations, empires, and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas .

**6.C&G.1.5** Summarize the beliefs and practices that shaped power and authority in various civilizations, empires, and societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

### **History**

**6.H.1.1** Explain the role various events, people, and groups played in the rise, fall, and transformation of societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

### **Student Resources**

Chromebooks

Expo Markers

Venn Diagrams

Graphic Organizers (included)

Readings (listed in resources)

Notebooks

Sites like Mr. Donn's, History, Britannica,

<https://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/ci/secondarycurriculum/Pages/Middle-School-Social-Studies.aspx>

<https://ancienthistory.mrdonn.org/>

<https://www.ducksters.com/history/>

<https://www.mrdowling.com/613-legalists.html>

Blooket

Kahoot

Padlet/Jamboard

Quizlet

Storyboard.that

Padlet/Jamboard

Whiteboards

## **Teacher Resources**

Butcher Block Paper

Markers

White Board

Preteaching

Hammurabi's Code: Was it Just? This includes the scenarios and DBQs.

<https://www.fcusd.org/cms/lib/CA01001934/Centricity/Domain/3209/Hammurabis%20Code%20DBQ.pdf>

Flocabulary has a video on Hammurabi's Code

Siddharth Guatama

<https://www.history.com/topics/religion/buddhism>

[The Story of Siddhartha Gautama - a Digital Story](#)

## **Legalism, Confucianism, Taoism**

Flocabulary has a great rap about Legalism.

Mr. Nicky Ancient China [ANCIENT CHINA song by Mr. Nicky](#)

Partner Philosophy Introduction using Primary Sources

[Partner Philosophies \(1\).doc](#)

[Zi Yuan Raises The Army Of The Dead | The Mummy: Tomb Of The Dragon Emperor](#)

Emperor Qin and Legalism Shape of Review

[Legalism & Emperor Qin Shape Up Review](#)

Video on Taoism, TedEd Yin and Yang

[The hidden meanings of yin and yang - John Bellaimey](#)

This is a good video to explain Taoism and/or Buddhism using an example of Kung Fu Panda. [World Religions Taoism](#)

This document will be used for students to research and determine the impact of these philosophies on their civilizations. Legalism was a guided lesson, so part of that can be completed beforehand with students as an exemplar. GRAPES Graphic Organizer to record the impact of Legalism, Taoism and Confucianism [GRAPES of Civilization Graphic Organizer](#)

Students match the quote with the philosophy

[Which Ancient China Philosophy?](#)

Ancient Greek Philosophers Resources

Introduction to Greek Philosophy

The History Teachers [Greek Philosophers \("Can't Get You Out of My Head" by Kylie Minogue\)](#)

[Ancient Greek Philosophy](#)

Introductory Reading:

[2021 Great Greeks\\_ The Philosophers.docx](#)

[Introduction to Greek Philosophers Alphaboxes Sheet](#)

[ANCIENT GREECE Song by Mr. Nicky](#)

[Phaeton: The Fall of the Son of Apollo - Greek Mythology Stories - See U in History](#)

[Trial of Socrates CU](#) Painting on Google Slide

Primary/Secondary Sources for Alexander the Great

<https://alexthegreatofmacedonia.weebly.com/primary--secondary-sources-on-alexander.html>

Padlet/Jamboard

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