

中国历史与文化

IREE 2010 - History and Culture of China

Activity: Analyzing Traditional Chinese Philosophies

Estimated Time: 30+ minutes in groups, 20 minutes perform and debrief

Task Configuration: Small Groups (3-4 people/group)

The Spring and Autumn (770-476 B.C.) and Warring States periods (475-221 B.C.), though marked by disunity and civil strife, witnessed an unprecedented era of cultural prosperity — the "golden age" of China. It was during these periods that China's great schools of intellectual thought — Confucianism, Legalism, Daoism, Mohism, and others — all developed. These philosophies have had a lasting impact on Chinese culture and society, even until today. This activity is designed to improve your ability to identify, analyze, and describe the dominant views and values of traditional China ideologies and philosophies.

Working in groups, develop the script for a conversation or debate among a Daoist, a Confucian, and a Legalist. You should discuss and describe how each school of thought would respond on the following issues:

- What is the purpose of good government?
- What role does morality play in formulating law?
- What are the qualities of a superior ruler?
- How are your traditional values relevant today?

You may divide up the work as your group sees fit. You are encouraged to use supplemental references, including the distributed handout and online sources such as Wikipedia. Also, be creative, and be prepared to act out your conversation!