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**Unit 6: Korean Politics and North Korea**

**Lesson 1. Korean Democracy Movement in the 1980s and Jeong(정)**

**Reflection**

I had the great opportunity to attend the Pathways to Cross-Cultural Understanding conference on Saturday, October 14, 2023. This year’s theme was understanding and teaching culture through the arts. My school is a two-year public high school for gifted and talented juniors and seniors from across Indiana under the state university and offers many college courses. I teach them Korean, using a Korean college textbook used in the U.S. I plan to offer a Korean culture class next spring semester. My Korean and Korean culture classes are more of a transition course between high school and college and will be a smooth transition to their college Korean courses. In planning the Korean culture course, I was wondering how to make my Korean culture class engaging while fostering their cultural resources and embracing their cultural diversity.

Initially, I planned my Korean culture class like a lecture-based college Korean culture class with some movies. The movies would allow the students to understand some heavy topics like Korean politics. I searched online to find lesson plans for Korean movies. However, there was not much information available, especially for my target audience, high school students. After seeing a flyer for the conference on teaching Korean culture through the arts, I signed up without hesitation and looked forward to it.

“Korean Cinema for the Classroom” by Duane Johansen and “Welcome to Hallyu-Wood” by Micky Miller were in line with my thoughts. I enjoyed many of the Korean films they recommended. Micky Miller’s presentation gave me a sense of how to create my lesson plans for teaching Korean culture. The first movie Duane Johansen recommended, “A Taxi Driver,” stuck with me to use it for one of the units I created, Korean politics. In fact, it would be very difficult to talk about politics in a culture class, but it would be impossible to understand Korea without understanding Korean politics. Korea has its own unique political ideologies. The movie “A Taxi Driver” is an excellent tool for a rich understanding of Korean society in the 1980s and a fundamental understanding of Korean politics. Also, I experienced Samulnori and K-pop during the conference, which made me think about how to use these kinds of hands-on cultural activities for my Korean culture class. After the conference, based on two presentations and my experience with cultural activities, I was inspired to approach my Korean culture class from a different angle, and I would like to share my lesson plans.

**Lesson Features**

* Topics: Korean democracy movement in the 1980s, Korea’s unique political ideologies, and Jeong(정)
* Historical time frame: 1979-1987
* Assessment: small-scale research project on dictatorship in the world and response paper on Jeong

**Lesson Overview**

Students explore the 1980s through the movie A Taxi Driver focusing on Korean democracy, the unique political ideologies of Korean society, and Jeong(정). They examine how Koreans achieved democracy through the Gwangju Democracy Movement and conduct short research on examples of dictatorships around the world. They explore the unique political ideologies of the 1980s and their influence on contemporary Korean society. They also understand a Korean cultural concept, Jeong(정), comparing and contrasting an American concept, love.

**Time Frame**

There are three activities. The first activity takes over two 50-minute blocks, and the second and third activities require each 50-minute block.

**Objectives and Learning Goals**

* Students will be able to know what happened in South Korea in terms of politics from 1980-1987.
* Students will be able to learn about how Koreans achieved democracy through the Gwangju democracy movement and its impact on other worlds.
* Students will be able to understand the unique political ideologies of South Korea.
* Students will be able to identify the Korean cultural concept of Jeong in Korean daily life.

**Standards**

Indiana academic standards-East Asian languages for middle and high school students

Standard 4 cultures: develop awareness of other cultures

3.4.4 Discuss significant events that have influenced the target cultures.

4.4.1 Analyze and reflect on cultural practices of the target cultures.

4.4.2 Discuss products, perspectives, and symbols of the target cultures through guided participation.

4.4.3 Explain factors that influence practices, products, and perspectives.

4.4.4 Explain and analyze significant events that have influenced the target cultures.

4.4.5 Explain contributions from the target language/East Asian cultures to the student’s own.

4.4.6 Recognize and use situation-appropriate and culturally accurate non-verbal communication.

Standard 6 connections: access and connect information through various media

4.6.2 Use digital media and culturally authentic resources to study target cultures.

Standard 7 comparisons: investigate the nature of language and culture

4.7.7 Compare systems of other cultures and the learner’s own culture.

4.7.8 Compare and contrast elements that shape cultural identity in the learner’s heritage and in the target cultures.

Standard 8 communities: become an active global citizen by experiencing languages and cultures in multiple settings

4.8.4 Research and present a local and/or global need that is identified as authentic by the cultures of the target language.

**Activity 1: Gwangju Democracy Movement-Rioters or Democracy Movement?**

Students identify the Gwangju Democracy Movement with the concept of democracy. They explore the political situation in 1979-1987 along with the Gwangju Democracy Movement. They understand how Koreans achieved democracy in 1987. They also study dictatorships in other countries.

**Activity Questions**

* How did Korean politics develop in terms of the presidency before the Gwangju incident?
* What are the essential elements of democracy?
* How did the citizens of Gwangju react to a new dictatorship?
* What was the role of the mass media during and after the Gwangju Democracy Movement?
* What did Korean citizens do to achieve democracy in 1987 after the Gwangju Democracy Movement?
* How did the Gwangju Democracy Movement affect the world?

Day 1

* To save class time, students watch the movie ‘A Taxi Driver’ before class and answer the questions on the worksheets as homework.
* Using the handout, students discuss essential elements of democracy and are asked the following questions: What did you notice about the movie? Were there any surprises? Which of the democratic elements on the handout were suppressed when the citizens of Gwangju protested?
* Students are given short lectures on the history of Korean presidents and their dictatorships.
* Students watch the documentary YouTube video (25:00-30:35) about the Gwangju Democracy Movement. As they watch, they make connections between the movie and the documentary. Students discuss the worksheet questions they completed for homework.

Day 2:

* Students think about 1980, when there was no internet, and imagine the world without the internet. They discuss why the citizens of Gwangju fought for free media in the film.
* Students discuss the role of media in democracy using worksheet questions.
* Students watch and discuss the second part of the YouTube (30:35-39:50) video about the aftermath of the Gwangju incident: What has the new government done since the Gwangju incident? How did other people know about the Gwangju incident? What have the Koreans done since the Gwangju incident to make it right? What did Korean citizens, including high school students, do in 1987? How did the Gwangju incident contribute to South Korea’s democratic movement? Students research dictatorships around the world for homework and share their research.

**Resources**

* YouTube movie A Taxi Driver: https://youtu.be/OWuB1ohsa3U?si=8mcWb8Ty4bay-GwC
* YouTube documentary: The Dynamic Development of Korean Democracy (25:00-39:50)

https://youtu.be/jUbuykLagps?si=yNKspeTTGYM2Jx9k

* Handout(attached): Identifying Essential Elements in a Democracy adopted from “Is Democracy at Risk?: A Lesson Plan for U.S. and Global History Classes” *The New York Times*, 10 Oct. 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/learning/lesson-plans/is-democracy-at-risk-a-lesson-plan-for-us-and-global-history-classes.html
* Worksheet(attached):

**Activity 2**

Students explore the conflicts of two generations and the unique political ideologies of the 1980s. They understand how South Korea’s unique geographical and historical backgrounds played a role in shaping its unique political ideologies and their impact on current politics.

**Activity questions**

What were the conflicts between the two generations in the 1980s?

What were the political ideologies of the 1980s?

How have these ideologies influenced politics today?

Day 3

* Students watch the following movie scenes:

When the taxi driver saw college students protesting, he said, “Did they go to the university to protest?...Spoiled bastards need to be shipped off to Saudi Arabia. Let them work themselves to death in the scoring desert, then they’ll realize, “Wow, my country is great!” (데모하러 대학갔어? 사우디로 보내봐야 한국이 살기 좋은 나라인지 알게 되지)(3:40 )/You went to the university to study, right? Then you should study(데모하러 대학갔어 공부해야지)(44:09).

* Students are asked: What were the conflicts between the old generation and the college students in the 1980s, and what were their priorities?
* Students are introduced to three film scenes:

Why did the taxi driver tell the soldier, “I am not a commie”?

When the taxi driver was caught by plainclothes police, he said, “I am not a commie.”

Two men and the restaurant owner talked about the Gwangju incident and they believed the news that communists and gangsterscaused the uprising in Gwangju.

* After watching the scenes, students are asked: Why did people use the word “communist” and how was it understood and used in the 1980s?
* Students read the article, “Defining Political Ideologies in South Korea”. Students discuss how political ideologies in the 1980s have influenced politics today.

**Resources**

* Article: “Defining Political Ideologies In South Korea: Dividing Line Growing More Complex and Flexible In Recent Years.” *The Korea Herald*, 29 Oct 2023, <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220406000856>

**Activity 3**

Students explore the Korean cultural concept, Jeong(정), and identify examples.

**Activity Questions**

* What is Jeong?
* How does Jeong relate to the concept of collectivist culture in Korea?
* What role does it play in Korean society?

Day4

* Students read the chapter “Jeong-The Invisible Hug” and discuss the following movie scenes related to Jeong as follows:

The citizens of Gwangju in the square gave food to the taxi driver and the reporter.

A taxi driver in Gwangju took the taxi driver, the reporter, and a college student home and treated them with food.

The taxi driver’s landlord took care of his daughter even though their children sometimes fought and he couldn’t pay the rent.

* Students compare a Korean cultural concept, Jeong, and an American concept, love and discuss the similarities and differences and how Jeong contributed to Korean society.

Compare and Contrast Activity

* Students compare the cultural concepts of individualistic Western cultures and collective Asian cultures. They discuss how the culture of collectivism relates to Jeong.
* Students discuss the movie scenes about Jeong using the question, “If Americans were in the same situation, what would they do?”
* Students watch some commercials for Choco Pie (쵸코파이) on YouTube, which used Jeong as a successful marketing strategy. Or students read the article “5 Ways the Korean Concept of ‘Jeong’ Can Help Your Business And Career According to Charlotte Cho.” Students discuss how a Korean American used Jeong as a successful business strategy in the U.S.
* Students bring examples of Jeong they have experienced or seen in K-dramas or movies as homework and share them.
* Students write a reflection paper on Jeong.

**Resources**

* Reading: Tudor, Daniel (2012). ch.7 Jeong-The Invisible Hug. In D. Tudor (Eds.), *Korea: The Impossible Country* (pp. 92-100). Tuttle Publishing.
* Reading: Eldor, Karin (2021) “5 Ways the Korean Concept of ‘Jeong’ Can Help Your Business and Career According to Charlotte Cho.” *Forbes,* 29 Oct. 2023,

https://www.forbes.com/sites/karineldor/2021/05/31/5-ways-the-korean-concept-of-jeong-can-positively-impact-your-business-according-to-charlotte-cho/?sh=2d42d9b12e0e

* YouTube (Choco pie): 오리온 초코파이 CF모음 (11:20)

https://youtu.be/WmeL6vjujm8?si=0js72v3Zx6RgnL2V

**Worksheet**

1. Why did the outraged citizens of Gwangju take to the streets in protest? Why were they beaten and arrested by soldiers?
2. When the taxi driver saw the students protesting, what did he say?
3. Why was Gwangju blockaded?
4. What word did the soldier use to define Gwangju citizens when the taxi driver and the reporter tried to go to Gwangju?
5. Why did the people of Gwangju give food to the reporter and the taxi driver? A taxi driver from Gwangju took them home and helped them fix their car even though they were not close. Why did he do this?
6. What important role did the German reporter play in the Gwangju incident?
7. Why did the Seoul-bound taxi driver decide to return to Gwangju after having lunch in a town?
8. How did the news report about the Gwangju incident at that moment?
9. Why did the taxi driver say to the soldier, “I am not a communist”? Why did he use the word “communist”?
10. Why did the taxi driver give the German reporter the wrong phone number?

**Handout**: Identifying Essential Elements in a Democracy

| **Ranking** | **Elements in a Democracy** |
| --- | --- |
|  | **checks and balances**: a system of separate branches of government that ensures political power is not concentrated in the hands of a single branch |
|  | **civic participation**: a society in which people take their civic duties seriously, such as by voting, staying informed and advocating for issues they care about |
|  | **economic freedom**: people are allowed to earn a living in a free marketplace |
|  | **education**: a system that provides young people with skills and information, so they can make informed decisions and secure economic independence |
|  | **equality**: all people are treated equally by the law |
|  | **free and fair elections**: regularly scheduled elections in which all voters have an equal opportunity to participate and where final results reflect honest vote totals |
|  | **freedom**: the right to act, speak and think as one wants without interference by the government |
|  | **free press**: news media is not controlled or restricted by the government |
|  | **independent judiciary**: judges have freedom to decide cases impartially, based on their interpretation of the law and the facts |
|  | **limited government**: a constitution that defines and limits the powers of government |
|  | **minimal corruption**: public trust that most elected leaders and civil servants (e.g., police officers and judges) perform their jobs without bribery or criminality |
|  | **multiparty system**: a political system that includes multiple parties to represent the varied interests of the public |
|  | **rule of law**: no one is above the law, including government leaders |
|  | **transparency**: information on how officials conduct the public business and spend taxpayers’ money is readily available and easily understood |