

THE GOOD EARTH

Grade Level or Special Area: 8th Grade Language Arts

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Length of Unit: Twelve lessons

I. ABSTRACT

Through reading and discussion of *The Good Earth*, this unit explores life in China during the early twentieth century from the perspective of Pearl Buck, the author, and traces the roots of social change that resulted in the triumph of Communism.

II. OVERVIEW

A. Concept Objectives

1. Understand an author's perspective and worldview.
2. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
3. Recognize the significance and impact of living conditions on social change.

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*

1. *The Good Earth* (Pearl S. Buck)

C. Skill Objectives (Colorado Grade Level Expectations)

1. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels. (8.1.A)
2. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres. (8.1.B)
3. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres. (8.1.C)
4. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words. (8.1.J)
5. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources. (8.1.K)
6. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion. (8.4.A)
7. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions. (8.4.B)
8. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view. (8.4.C)
9. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing. (8.4.D)
10. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue. (8.4.E)
11. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays. (8.6.A)
12. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar. (8.6.B)
13. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view. (8.6.C)
14. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context. (8.6.E)

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

A. For Teachers

1. Doyle, Paul A. *Pearl S. Buck*

2. Conn, Peter, *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography*
 3. Sherk, Warren, *Pearl S. Buck: Good Earth Mother*
 4. Stirling, Nora, *Pearl Buck: A Woman in Conflict*
- B. For Students
1. **History and Geography:** China under European domination: Opium Wars, Boxer Rebellion, Sun Yat Sen – *Core Knowledge Sequence* Grade 8
 2. **History and Geography:** Communists take power, *Core Knowledge Sequence* Grade 8
 3. **History and Geography:** Geography of China, *Core Knowledge Sequence* Grade 8

IV. RESOURCES

- A. Buck, Pearl S., *The Good Earth*
- B. Doyle, Paul A. *Pearl S. Buck*
- C. Stirling, Nora, *Pearl Buck: A Woman in Conflict*
- D. Conn, Peter, *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography*
- E. Collins, Mary B. *The Good Earth: A Unit Plan*

V. LESSONS

Lesson One: Pearl Buck

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand an author’s perspective and worldview.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Pearl Sydenstricker Buck was born on June 16, 1892, in Hillsboro, West Virginia, but her parents took her to China when she was only a few months old.
 - b. She spoke Chinese, played with Chinese children, and listened to countless stories told by her old Chinese nurse.
 - c. After fleeing to Shanghai during the Boxer Rebellion, Pearl was instructed by Mr. Kung, a Chinese tutor who taught her Chinese reading and writing, as well as many of the principles of Confucianism.
 - d. During her year at Miss Jewell’s School (1909), Pearl was able to visit an institution for slave girls who had fled their owners. Because she spoke Chinese fluently, Pearl was able to carry on long on long conversations with these women.
 - e. At seventeen Pearl came to the United States and entered Randolph-Macon Woman’s College.
 - f. She returned to China in 1914 after receiving her college degree, and three years later married John Lossing Buck, an American agricultural expert. She and John lived the next five years in the Anwhei province in North China.
 - g. In 1921 Pearl and John Buck moved to Nanking, and that same year Caroline Sydenstricker, Pearl’s mother, died. Soon after her mother’s death Pearl began to write a biography about her. This became her first book, although it was not published until 1936.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will recognize an author’s or speaker’s point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - b. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.

- c. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
- B. *Materials*
1. *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck (Enriched Classics Series)
 2. *Pearl S. Buck: Good Earth Mother* by Warren Sherk
 3. “Who Was Pearl Buck?” (Appendix A)
 4. “Chronology of Pearl Buck’s Life” (Appendix B)
 5. “Summary of Warren Sherk, Good Earth Mother” (Appendix C)
 6. “Peter Conn, A Cultural Biography” (Appendix D)
 7. “The Setting of the Novel” (Appendix E)
 8. “Questions on the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution” (Appendix F)
 9. “Rubric for Evaluating Oral Reading” (Appendix G)
 10. “Comparing the Novel and the Movie” (Appendix H)
 11. Notebook
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Nobel Prize for Literature – granted by the Swedish Academy not for a single book, but for an author’s entire body of work
 2. Pulitzer Prize – named after Hungarian newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, this award honors books which address the largest themes in life, the tragedy and passion of the human condition
 3. Phenylketonuria (PKU) – a rare, inherited disease arising from the absence of a single enzyme resulting in mental retardation and other neurological problems if treatment is not started in the first few weeks of life; Pearl Buck’s only daughter was a victim of this disease and, as a result, never progressed beyond the mental age of four years
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Assign Introduction, xi-xxx in *The Good Earth* to be read prior to class.
 2. Write **Pulitzer Prize** on board and discuss. Do the same for **Nobel Prize** and **PKU**.
 3. Pass out handout, “Who was Pearl Buck?” Appendix A and have students work in groups of three to answer as many of the questions as they can. (They may use text to find answers.) Discuss the questions as a class.
 4. Pass out Appendix B “Chronology of Pearl Buck’s Life” handout and note significant events, i.e., birth and death dates, birth of Carol (*The Child Who Never Grew*), Pulitzer Prize, Nobel Prize, marriages, and humanitarian efforts.
 5. Summarize the ideas presented in Warren Sherk’s book about Pearl Buck’s life in China, the Nobel Prize, and his comments in the Epilogue (Appendix C)
 6. Read selections from Peter Conn’s book about Pearl Buck’s life (Appendix D)
 7. Ask students, “So what do you think of Pearl Buck?” Note that whether they like her or not she made a significant contribution to bridging the gap between East and West with her books.
 8. Distribute handouts for next class on “The Setting of the Novel,” (Appendix E).
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Without benefit of notes, students will write in class a brief essay based on one of the questions from “Who Was Pearl Buck?” (Appendix A) and class discussion.

Lesson Two: The Setting of the Novel

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.

- b. Recognize the significance and impact of living conditions on social change.
- 2. Lesson Content
 - a. The Boxer Rebellion (1900) and Reforms of the Early 1900's
 - b. The 1911 Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen
 - c. The first third of the novel is set in the province of Anhwei. The primary characters are peasants living outside a small village. Life revolves around the land. Pearl Buck was especially well qualified to discuss this life, since she and her husband lived in Anhwei among the peasants.
 - d. After a drought and subsequent famine force the family to join thousands of others fleeing to the South of China, they live for a time in the city of Kiangsu.
 - e. When the 1911 revolution breaks out the Wang family is swept up in the crowds, and end up getting money to return to their beloved land, albeit unlawfully.
 - f. The last half of the book sees the family return to Anhwei to begin life again.
- 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - b. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - c. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - d. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - e. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.

B. *Materials*

- 1. "Setting of the Novel" (Appendix E)
- 2. "Questions on the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution" (Appendix F)
- 3. Student handouts of map of China and large map of China (note for teachers: you may go to the following URL to print off copies of the map, make an overhead, or have students go to the site and identify the provinces:
http://hua.umf.maine.edu/Chinese/maps/chinese_map.html)
- 4. Overhead projector
- 5. Overhead slides of questions
- 6. TV with VHS player
- 7. Videotape of "The Last Emperor"
- 8. Notebooks

C. *Key Vocabulary*

- 1. Setting – the time and place of the action of a literary, dramatic, or cinematic work
- 2. Boxer Rebellion – a Chinese secret society, the *Righteous Uniting Band, that in 1900 attempted by violence to drive foreigners out of China and to force Chinese converts to Christianity to renounce their faith (*the Chinese words were mistranslated as "Righteous Uniting Fists," and members became known in western papers as the Boxers)
- 3. Ch'ing dynasty – a Manchu dynasty in China that lasted from 1644 until 1912, the last imperial dynasty
- 4. Coup d'etat – violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group

5. Sun Yat-sen – a Westernized Chinese revolutionary who had first tried to overthrow the Ch'ing in an abortive coup attempt in 1895, leader of the 1911 Revolution and often referred to as “The Father of the Revolution”
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Students will have prepared for this class by doing research on the Web or in reference resources about the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution in Southern China, and answering the questions on the handout. Discuss these questions in class.
 2. Discuss the Ch'ing dynasty and show excerpt from the video release of the 1987 movie *The Last Emperor*, directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, and starring John Lone and Joan Chen.
 3. Have students brainstorm about why the Boxer Rebellion failed and why the 1911 Revolution was somewhat successful.
 4. Discuss the impact of the 1911 Revolution on the peasant population.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Students will turn in questions and answers.
 2. Use guidelines to evaluate groups on brainstorming. There are some excellent guidelines for brainstorming On-line at <http://www.web.mit.edu/hr/oed/toolbox/brainstorm.html>, <http://www.cs.unb.ca/profs/fritz/cs3503/storm35.htm>, and <http://www.thebrainexchange.com/guidelines.html>.

Lesson Three: Geography and Culture of China

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Geography of China, noting especially Anhwei and Kiangsu
 - b. Customs and Culture of China in the early 1900's, including the status and treatment of women, family relationships, and religious beliefs
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - c. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
- B. *Materials*
1. Map of China in early 1900's and today
 2. Have students bring in pictures for bulletin board, illustrating geography, dress, hair styles, footbinding, farming, temples and gods, walled towns and cities
 3. Bulletin board and stapler for mounting
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Foot-binding – a custom that allegedly began during the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618 to 907) when a court dancer bound her feet to fit them into tiny dancing shoes, foot-binding was prized by men as a status symbol, showing that their wives and daughters did not need to do any physical work
 2. Taoism – refers to a power which surrounds and flows through all things; it evolved as a state religion in China by 440 B.C. and continued to enjoy this

- status until the end of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911; the Tao believer seeks answers to life's problems through inner meditation and outer observation
3. Buddhism – originally developed in India, Buddhism was brought to China around the first century A.D. - the three basic concepts of Buddhism are Karma, Samsara, and Nirvana; there are also Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eight-Fold Path leading to Nirvana
 4. Earth God Shrines – according to Chinese folk religion, every town or community had its own protective god, or gods. Incense is lit in an urn in front of the gods
 5. Confucianism – the Confucian philosophy held that there was a basic order in the universe that should be reflected in human relations; the virtue of filial piety, or devotion of the child to his parents, was the foundation for all others; the ruler had a “Mandate of Heaven” justifying his right to rule
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Plan a trip. Divide students into groups and tell them they will be tour guides for a trip to China, a trip specifically to retrace the steps of Pearl Buck and the places mentioned in *The Good Earth*. (Model this on “living history” sites such as old Plimoth Plantation in Massachusetts. See www.plimoth.org/). The group has three tasks:
 - a. Select one person to be the tour guide, then, as a group, create an itinerary for a two week tour.
 - b. Select one or more persons to be members of the tour group, then, as a group, think of pertinent questions to ask.
 - c. Select persons to be a farmer, farmer's wife, and Chinese merchant to answer the questions of the tour group.
 2. Each group will make a presentation to the rest of the class, using overhead slides or other visual aids, such as maps.
 3. Assign students to do research on the Chinese method of storytelling.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Groups will be evaluated on content and presentation.

Lesson Four: Literary Elements

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand an author's perspective and worldview.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. *The Good Earth* as historical fiction in the style of Chinese storytelling
 - b. Characters
 - c. Plot
 - d. Themes
 - e. Conflict
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - b. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
- B. *Materials*
1. Sketch Pads
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
1. Plot – sequence of events which give focus to the story, usually including a beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution

2. Theme – the controlling idea of the story
 3. Conflict – the clash of ideas or actions that result in the struggle of the main character with opposing forces (Protagonist, Wang Lung, and Antagonist, composite of Wang Lung’s difficulties; Climax, Wang Lung becomes wealthy; Symbolic Conflict, traditional, symbolized by Wang Lung, versus more modern way of life that ignores customs and traditions, symbolized by Wang Lung’s sons)
 4. Climax – the turning point for the main character in the story
 5. Character – persons that perform the action of the story
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Discuss what students discovered about Chinese storytelling, especially how it differs from other genres of literature.
 2. Discuss genre of novel, and especially note how Pearl Buck’s style in the 1930’s is unique because she follows the model of Chinese storytelling emphasizing event and characterization.
 3. Introduce the characters of the story and have students sketch or find in a magazine a person they feel represents this character. Post the sketches in the room. Discuss which characters are round or flat, static or dynamic and why.
 4. Discuss the Plot*
 5. Discuss Theme(s)*
 6. Discuss Conflicts*
 7. Hand out vocabulary words for Lesson Five and allow time for students to look them up.
- *You as a teacher will provide most of the information for this section, using this as an opportunity to help students understand literary elements.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Quiz over literary elements, including specifics from *The Good Earth*
 2. Grade homework on Chinese storytelling and on materials brought in for bulletin board.

Lesson Five: Wang Lung the Farmer and O Lan (Chapters 1-4)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Vocabulary
 - b. Wang Lung’s wedding day
 - c. O-lan, servant and wife
 - d. Status of women in China before and after the Revolution
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.

- f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
- g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
- h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
- i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
- j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
- k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
- l. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
- m. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. *Materials*

- 1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
- 2. Notebook
- 3. Study Questions (note to teachers: Sample study questions may be found in Mary B. Collins' *The Good Earth: A Unit Plan*, pages 11-24)
- 4. Rubric to evaluate oral reading (Appendix G)

C. *Key Vocabulary*

- 1. Mutinous – rebellious
- 2. Low – moo
- 3. Sup – eat
- 4. Dais – a raised platform
- 5. Obeisance – gesture of homage, deference, or reverence
- 6. Writhe – contort
- 7. Querulous – grumbling, complaining
- 8. Zenith – highest point
- 9. Frugal – thrifty
- 10. Depreciate – make less of something

D. *Procedures/Activities*

- 1. Students will prepare for class by reading chapters 1-4 of *The Good Earth* and answering the study questions in their notebooks.
- 2. Give vocabulary quiz over the 10 words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
- 3. Discuss the questions and have students read aloud from selected portions, changing their voices to fit the characters or narrator, as appropriate.
- 4. Students pass in notebooks so that you can check their questions and answers.
- 5. Distribute worksheets with spelling words and definitions, and questions for Lesson Six.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

- 1. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading (Appendix G).
- 2. Grade vocabulary quiz.
- 3. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.

Lesson Six: From Prosperity to Poverty (Chapters 5-9)

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Vocabulary
 - b. The Chinese New Year
 - c. The visit to the Old Mistress at the House of Hwang
 - d. Purchase of more land
 - e. Contrast between Wang Lung and O-lan, and his uncle and his uncle's wife
 - f. The drought and famine
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
 - i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
 - k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
 - l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
 - m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. *Materials*

1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
2. Notebooks
3. Study Questions
4. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. Concubine – woman contracted as second wife
2. Arduous – difficult
3. Berate – reprimand; scold

4. Unctuous – slick; characterized by insincere earnestness
 5. Reap – harvest; cut and collect
 6. Importuning – persistently pleading
 7. Ardent – unshakeable; calm and steady
 8. Imperturbable – passionate; full of strong feeling or enthusiasm
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Give vocabulary quiz over the eight words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
 2. Have students summarize the reading for Chapters 5-9 and discuss any points of confusion from their reading.
 3. Discuss the questions. Note especially the practice of cannibalism, mental retardation, and infanticide, and discuss the moral/ethical issues related to each.
 4. Have students read orally with appropriate emphasis and expression.
 5. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Seven and assign reading for Chapters 10-14.
 6. Take up notebooks and quickly review whether students are answering the study questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading (Appendix G).
 2. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.
 3. Grade vocabulary quiz.

Lesson Seven: Life in the City (Chapters 10-14)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Recognize the significance and impact of living conditions on social change.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Vocabulary
 - b. The Wangs become refugees and leave their land
 - c. Life with the homeless
 - d. An encounter with a foreigner
 - e. Christianity and Communism
 - f. Plundering the rich man's household—Wang Lung and O-lan become thieves
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.

- h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
 - i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
 - k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
 - l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
 - m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
 - 2. Notebooks
 - 3. Study Questions (Appendix F)
 - 4. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Firewagon – train
 - 2. Cowering – cringing in fear
 - 3. Incessant – continuous
 - 4. Wizedened – withered; wrinkled
 - 5. Piteous – deserving pity
 - 6. Contrived – devised; planned
 - 7. Ricksha – a small two-wheeled carriage pulled by one or two people
 - 8. Opulent – having great wealth or property
 - 9. Clad – clothed
 - 10. Consternation – amazement or dismay that hinders or throws into confusion
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Give vocabulary quiz over the 10 words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
 - 2. Have students summarize the chapters through class discussion. Make sure participation is from a wide range of students, not just the few who always volunteer.
 - 3. Discuss the questions and have students read orally the related sections from the book. Emphasize “getting into character” as they read, e.g., begging or the scene in the rich man’s bedroom.
 - 4. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Eight and assign reading for Chapters 15-19.
 - 5. Check notebooks to see that students are answering questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading.
 - 2. Grade vocabulary quiz.
 - 3. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.

Lesson Eight: Rags to Riches—Return to the Land (Chapters 15-19)

A. Daily Objectives

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand an author’s perspective and worldview.
2. Lesson Content
 - a. The Wangs return home to the land
 - b. Wang Lung discovers the bag of jewels O-lan has hidden in her bosom
 - c. Wang Lung buys more land from the House of Hwang
 - d. Twins are born to Wang Lung and O-lan, increasing their children to five
 - e. The flood
 - f. Wang Lung is unhappy with O-lan and begins a relationship with Lotus
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - f. Students will recognize an author’s or speaker’s point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
 - i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author’s use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
 - k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
 - l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
 - m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. Materials

1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
2. Notebook
3. Study Questions
4. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)

C. Key Vocabulary

1. Quiescent – quiet; still; inactive
2. Begrudge – give reluctantly or resentfully
3. Shrewish – ill-humored; ill-natured
4. Virtuous – morally excellent; chaste

5. Impudent – bold and offensive
 6. Compel – to force
 7. Boisterous – loud
 8. Idle – inactive; not working
 9. Pagoda – a multi-story Buddhist tower erected as a temple or memorial
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
1. Give vocabulary quiz over the nine words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
 2. Have students write brief summaries of the chapters and turn them in to be graded.
 3. Discuss the questions and have students read orally the related sections from the book. Note especially how Wang Lung is changing and talk about what is causing these changes. Also discuss the “tea houses.”
 4. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Nine and assign reading for Chapters 20-23.
 5. Check notebooks to see that students are answering questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading.
 2. Grade vocabulary and summaries.
 3. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.

Lesson Nine: Second Wife—Lotus (Chapters 20-23)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wang Lung’s uncle and his wife and son come to live in Wang Lung’s house.
 - b. Wang Lung takes Lotus as a second wife
 - c. Conflicts arise between O-land and Cuckoo, and between Lotus and other members of the household
 - d. Wang Lung renews his bond with the land and for awhile demonstrates maturity and balance
 - e. Lotus helps find a wife for the oldest son
 - f. When Wang Lung tries to evict his uncle’s family he learns that his uncle was one of the notorious “red beards”
 - g. The land is invaded by locusts (Note: In the movie this is the climax and results in Wang Lung being reunited with O-lan and his sons. Pearl Buck approved this ending for the movie.)
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.

- f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
- g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
- h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
- i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
- j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
- k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
- l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
- m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
- n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. *Materials*

- 1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
- 2. Notebooks
- 3. Study Questions
- 4. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)
- 5. Videotape of *The Good Earth*

C. *Key Vocabulary*

- 1. Agape – in a state of wonder or amazement
- 2. Repine – be discontented or in low spirits
- 3. Volubly – characterized by fluent speech
- 4. Dallied – tarried
- 5. Malice – intent of ill-will
- 6. Surly – gruff
- 7. Peevishly – in a contrary way; querulously
- 8. Distraught – emotionally upset
- 9. Yearn – to long for

D. *Procedures/Activities*

- 1. Give vocabulary quiz over the nine words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
- 2. Have students tell the story of these chapters. One student begins the story by telling about Wang Lung's uncle moving in, another continues with the account of his taking Lotus as a second wife, etc.
- 3. Ask students which questions (from the study sheet) they would like to discuss. Make sure to cover filial relationships (why Wang Lung could not refuse his uncle) and the practice of having concubines. Divide the class in half and have one group support the filial practice while the other opposes it. Then, have the other group support Wang Lung's right to have a concubine while the other opposes it.
- 4. At the end of that discussion have students compare and contrast these practices with American views of marriage and families, e.g., the problems that occur when a parent remarries and/or families are combined.

5. Have students read orally from Chapters 21 and 22 and discuss why returning to the land restores Wang Lung's perspective.
 6. Show the excerpt from the movie about the invasion of the locusts and discuss how natural disasters can sometimes bring people together.
 7. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Ten and assign reading for Chapters 24-27.
 8. Check notebooks to see that students are answering questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
1. Vocabulary quiz
 2. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in the storytelling exercise and class discussion.
 3. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading.

Lesson Ten: Betrayal and Loss (Chapters 24-27)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wang Lung learns that prosperity does not guarantee harmony when he discovers that his oldest son has been spending time with Lotus.
 - b. O-lan gets weaker as a result of a tumor
 - c. The second son is apprenticed to the grain merchant Liu, and Wang Lung arranges a betrothal between his second daughter, now ten, and a son of Liu who is the same age. The issue of foot-binding is once again addressed.
 - d. O-lan's illness progresses and Wang Lung stays at her bedside.
 - e. At O-lan's request, the oldest son returns to marry Liu's daughter.
 - f. O-lan dies during the wedding feast, and a short time later Wang Lung's father dies
 - g. When his nephew makes sexual advances on Wang Lung's younger daughter, she is sent to live in the house of Liu.
 - h. As the uncle and his wife become more difficult Wang Lung takes his oldest son's advice and begins to buy opium for them.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.

- i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
 - k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
 - l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
 - m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.
- B. *Materials*
- 1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
 - 2. Notebooks
 - 3. Study Questions
 - 4. Rubric of Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
- 1. Petulant – unreasonable; ill-tempered
 - 2. Purge – purify; rid of undesirable elements
 - 3. Remorse – bitter regret
 - 4. Languor – lack of energy; listlessness
 - 5. Acquiescent – passively agreeable
 - 6. Scrupulous – conscientious; exact
 - 7. Musing – considering thoughtfully
 - 8. Opium – a bitter brownish addictive narcotic drug obtained from immature seed capsules of the opium poppy (Note for teacher: Cultivation of the opium poppy for use as a narcotic goes back to Mesopotamia (3400 B.C.). In 1700 the Dutch exported opium from India to China and introduced the practice of smoking opium to the Chinese. Opium, morphine, and codeine alkaloids are obtained from immature seed capsules one to three weeks after flowering. Morphine is the raw material from which heroin is obtained. The poppy seeds are not narcotic once they develop, and are used as a condiment with baked goods and pastries. The oil of the mature poppy seed is used as an edible cooking oil.)
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
- 1. Give vocabulary quiz over the eight words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
 - 2. Discuss the questions and answers.
 - 3. Discuss the ethics of Wang Lung's decision to addict his uncle and uncle's wife to opium. Discuss the impact of drugs on a society. Refer back to history of opium in Britain, U.S., and China, and talk about drug problem today. Encourage candid opinions from students.
 - 4. Have students read orally selected passages.
 - 5. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Eleven and assign reading for Chapters 28-31.
 - 6. Check notebooks to see that students are answering questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
- 1. Vocabulary quiz.
 - 2. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.
 - 3. Use rubric to evaluate oral reading.

Lesson Eleven: Invasion by Relatives (Chapters 28-31)

A. Daily Objectives

1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture
2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wang Lung rents the old Hwang mansion and the oldest son and his wife, as well as Lotus and Cuckoo move into it.
 - b. Wang Lung remains in the farmhouse with the oldest daughter, the “poor fool.”
 - c. The personalities and character of the three sons become more distinct.
 - d. Wang Lung’s old friend Ching dies, and Wang Lung breaks his ties with the land and moves into town.
 - e. The old uncle dies and Wang moves his aunt into a back section of the mansion.
 - f. Over the next five years Wang Lung becomes grandfather to four boys and three girls, but there is discord in his family.
3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.
 - b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
 - c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
 - d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
 - e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
 - f. Students will recognize an author’s or speaker’s point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
 - g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
 - h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
 - i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
 - j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author’s use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
 - k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
 - l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
 - m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
 - n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. Materials

1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
2. Notebooks
3. Study Questions

4. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)
- C. *Key Vocabulary*
 1. Robust – full of energy and strength
 2. Musing – thinking reflectively; pondering
 3. Eminence – position of superiority
 4. Bleary – blurred and/or reddened
 5. Demurred – objected
- D. *Procedures/Activities*
 1. Give vocabulary quiz over the five words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
 2. Have students read key passages orally as class discusses questions. Note especially the three sons of Wang Lung and talk about their diversity. Have students write down characteristics of each son and predict how they will turn out. (In Lesson Twelve you will let them know what happened to the sons by referring to the second and third books of the trilogy).
 3. Distribute questions and vocabulary for Lesson Twelve and assign reading for Chapters 31-34.
 4. Check notebooks to see that students are answering questions.
- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 1. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.
 2. Vocabulary quiz

Lesson Twelve: Wang Lung's Final Days (Chapters 31-34)

- A. *Daily Objectives*
 1. Concept Objective(s)
 - a. Understand an author's perspective and worldview.
 - b. Gain an appreciation and understanding of a particular culture.
 2. Lesson Content
 - a. Wang Lung's cousin, who has gone off to the wars, and a band of soldiers invade the town and take up residence in the mansion.
 - b. The cousin wants Pear Blossom for himself, but thanks to Lotus he settles for another woman whom he leaves pregnant. Fortunately, she gives birth to a girl.
 - c. Wang Lung's youngest son wants to join the fighting to free the land of the old system (probably the Communist movement that was already forming in China in the 1920s).
 - d. Wang Lung finds a new love in the young slave Pear Blossom. This results in a final break with his youngest son, who wanted her for himself.
 - e. Pear Blossom promises to look after the "poor fool" after Wang Lung's death.
 - f. Wang Lung moves back to the old farmhouse with his retarded daughter and Pear Blossom.
 - g. The first and second sons talk of selling the land after Wang Lung's death.
 - h. In the two sequels the three sons become respectively, a decadent landlord, a dishonest merchant, and a warlord called Wang the Tiger.
 3. Skill Objective(s)
 - a. Students will use a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels.

- b. Students will paraphrase, summarize, synthesize, and evaluate information from a variety of text and genres.
- c. Students will identify main idea and supporting details in a variety of text and genres.
- d. Students will apply knowledge of letter-sound correspondence, language structures, and context to recognize words.
- e. Students will locate meanings, pronunciations, and derivations of unfamiliar words using dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources.
- f. Students will recognize an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion.
- g. Students will use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions.
- h. Students will make predictions, draw conclusions, and analyze what they read, hear and view.
- i. Students will recognize, express, and defend a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing.
- j. Students will determine literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism or dialogue.
- k. Students will read, respond to, and discuss a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays.
- l. Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar.
- m. Students will use literature terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, dialect, and point of view.
- n. Students will use new vocabulary from literature in other context.

B. *Materials*

- 1. Buck, Pearl S. *The Good Earth*
- 2. Buck, Pearl S. *Sons* (second of The House of Earth trilogy—begins with Wang Lung's death)
- 3. Buck, Pearl S. *A House Divided* (third of The House of Earth trilogy—continues the story with Wang Lung's son, Wang the Tiger, and grandson, Wang Yuan)
- 4. Study Questions
- 5. Rubric for Oral Reading Evaluation (Appendix G)

C. *Key Vocabulary*

- 1. Horde – overflowing crowd
- 2. Uncomely – homely or plain
- 3. Finicking – excessively exacting or meticulous in taste or standards
- 4. Slavishly – like a slave
- 5. Loath – reluctant
- 6. Coquetry – flirting or flirtatious

D. *Procedures/Activities*

- 1. Give vocabulary quiz over the six words listed. Call out the words and have students write the words and definitions correctly.
- 2. Discuss questions and have students read out loud relevant passages.
- 3. Refer students back to their predictions about the sons and tell them what actually happened to them according to the sequels.
- 4. Have students discuss why or why not they think *The Good Earth* is an important book for people in the 21st century.
- 5. Play “Jeopardy” as a way to review for the test.

- E. *Assessment/Evaluation*
 1. Using a list of students, rate them on participation in class discussion.
 2. Using rubric in appendix, grade students on oral reading.
 3. Multiple choice, matching, short answer, and essay test over the entire book.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

- A. View and discuss the video release of the 1937 movie *The Good Earth*, directed by Victor Fleming and starring Paul Muni and Luise Rainer.
- B. Use questions and suggestions from “Comparing the Novel and the Movie” (Appendix H).

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

- A. Appendix A: Who Was Pearl Buck?
- B. Appendix B: Chronology of Pearl Buck’s Life
- C. Appendix C: Summary of Warren Sherk, *Good Earth Mother*
- D. Appendix D: Peter Conn, *A Cultural Biography*
- E. Appendix E: The Setting of the Novel
- F. Appendix F: Questions on the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution
- G. Appendix G: Rubric for Evaluating Oral Reading
- H. Appendix H: Comparing the Novel and the Movie

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Appendix B

Chronology of Pearl Buck's Life

- 1892 Pearl Sydenstricker was born on June 26, in Hillsboro, West Virginia, while her parents, Absalom and Caroline, were on furlough from their work as missionaries to China. When Pearl was three months old, she was taken back to China, where she remained for most of the first forty years of her life.
- 1900 During the Boxer Uprising, Caroline and the children were forced to flee to Shanghai. Later that year, after Absalom rejoined them, the family returned to the U.S. for another furlough.
- 1910 Pearl enrolled in Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, Virginia.
- 1914 Pearl graduated and returned to China after learning that her mother was seriously ill.
- 1917 Pearl married John Lossing Buck, an agricultural economist living in China. They had first met in 1915. The Bucks moved to Anhwei province, and it was from this experience with peasants that enabled her to write *The Good Earth*.
- 1920 Pearl and Lossing moved to Nanking to teach at Nanking University. They would call this home until 1933.
- 1921 Carol Buck was born, and, though not known at the time of her birth, was a victim of PKU. Because of a uterine tumor discovered during the delivery, Pearl underwent a hysterectomy.
- 1925 Pearl and Lossing adopted a baby girl, Janice.
- 1927 In March, because of the "Nanking incident" the Bucks had to go to Japan where they remained for the rest of the year.
- 1934 Pearl moved permanently to the U.S. to be closer to Carol, who was in an institution in New Jersey, and to be closer to Richard Walsh.
- 1935 Pearl divorced Lossing in June and married Richard Walsh. She and Richard would adopt six more children over the following years.
- 1935 Pearl won the Pulitzer Prize and the Howell's Medal for *The Good Earth*.
- 1938 Pearl won the Nobel Prize in Literature, the first American woman to do so.
- 1942 Pearl and Richard founded the East and West Association, dedicated to cultural exchange and understanding between Asia and the West.
- 1949 Pearl established Welcome House, the first international, inter-racial adoption agency. Welcome House has so far assisted in placing over five thousand children.
- 1964 Pearl established the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, which provides support for Asian-American children in a half dozen Asian countries who are not eligible for adoption.
- 1973 Pearl Buck died in March, just two months before her eighty-first birthday. She is buried at Green Hills Farm, PA.

Appendix C

Summary of Warren Sherk, Good Earth Mother

Dr. Warren Sherk worked with Pearl S. Buck as her national Field Secretary for the East and West Association in the 1940s. His book is a first-hand account of personal association as well as intimate information from writings and correspondence and informal interviews with friends and associates.

In eighteen chapters Dr. Sherk begins with Pearl's birth in West Virginia and traces her life through her college career and return to China in the first two chapters.

The more interesting stories begin in chapter seven when Pearl received the Pulitzer Prize in 1932. To a crowd of hundreds in the Astor Hotel in New York, Pearl voiced her opinions about Western Christianity as perceived by the Chinese.

“She proceeded to label some of the missionaries as arrogant, superstitious, and downright cruel. Why, she wanted to know, did the mission boards so often send only their second best men and women in the service of the Lord? ‘The better ones often found themselves obliged to leave the service, so hampered by the criteria of membership rolls and statistics.... The missionary must go to fill a need, not to represent a creed.’ ‘I am here,’ she continued, ‘speaking as one of you. By birth and ancestry I am an American, and by choice and belief I am a Christian, but by the years of my life, by sympathy and feeling, I am Chinese. So let me say to you what many Chinese have said to me, ‘Come to us no more in arrogance of spirit. Come as brothers and fellow men. Let me see in you how your religion works. Preach to us no more, but share with us that better and more abundant life which your Christ lived. Give us your best or nothing.’” (p. 77)

It was also during this period that Pearl became acquainted with the plight of the black Americans. For the rest of her life she would be an outspoken advocate of civil rights.

After her marriage to Richard Walsh, Pearl used *Asia* magazine as a forum for commenting on the Western misunderstanding of the Eastern mind and culture. She “was increasingly concerned that lack of understanding of other cultures and other ways of thinking were leading the Western world into armed conflict with the Eastern countries.” (p. 97)

In 1937 Pearl became the first American woman to win the Nobel Prize for Literature for *The Good Earth*. When Pearl went to Sweden to receive the award only China's Nationalist representative boycotted the ceremony, reacting to an interview in which Pearl had emphasized that “a strong central government was China's one solution to peace,” noting “that by ignoring the strength of the peasants, General Chiang Kai-shek had lost a great opportunity.” (p. 111)

During the years of World War II Pearl Buck became a valuable resource for President and Mrs. Roosevelt in understanding the Asian mind. She also used this friendship to press for the release of Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a prisoner of the British Empire in India. After the War she bombarded political leaders with letters in a futile attempt to interest Americans in the plight of Japanese women affected by the bombing of Hiroshima.

Pearl and Richard Walsh “in the twenty five years of their marriage . . . never spent a night apart.” “Of this happy time Pearl recounted, ‘We lived deeply. Our pleasures were in music, in people, in the children, books and the world of mountain, woods and the sea.’” (Pp. 124-125)

In 1942 Pearl Buck founded the East and West Association to promote understanding between peoples East and West through mutual knowledge. One of the greatest contributions of the Association was to introduce Central American, Latin American, and Asian performers to American audiences. “‘Peoples East and West,’ a course lasting fifteen weeks, was given in many of America's largest cities.” (p. 135)

“...Because of the emotional stress Pearl had suffered at the hands of missionaries, organized religion would remain distasteful to her for the rest of her life. She did not deny God, as her atheist husband Richard did; it was only some of His so-called servants that displeased her so much.” (p. 136)

“Unfortunately, the East and West Association, in spite of all the good it had done in fostering friendship between the nations involved, became the victim of Senator Joseph McCarthy, who intimated that it had become tainted by Communist infiltration, particularly among the Chinese artists. He waged a personal vendetta against both East and West and Pearl S. Buck, and she finally disbanded it.” (p. 137)

After the Revolution in China Pearl tried to educate her fellow Americans on the value of keeping a dialogue with the Chinese people, including trading with them, pointing out that there is a difference between recognizing a government and approving it. (Pp. 137-138)

“Back in 1943, while serving as vice chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union . . . Pearl condemned the confiscation of Japanese-American owned farmlands. This earned her a place on a list of ‘dangerous persons’ who had aided the Communists, published by Republican Senator Jack Tenney. Pearl S. Buck replied with characteristic dignity to her accuser: ‘I want to do more than merely deny that I am or have even been sympathetic to Communism. I am anti-Communist to the last drop of my blood. But this is far more than a personal matter. As a loyal and enthusiastic American, I say that the present activities of a few Americans are making our country a laughing stock for the whole world.’” (p. 138)

“Several years after the death of Pearl S. Buck . . . Charles Trueheart, writing in the *Washington Post*, disclosed that ‘for more than fifty years, the FBI and other federal agencies gathered massive intelligence files on some of America’s most distinguished writers, apparently because their work was considered subversive, suspicious or unconventional.’ Among them was Pearl S. Buck and . . . William Faulkner. Of Pearl S. Buck, the FBI agency wrote, ‘Although it is not believed from information available that Mrs. Buck is a Communist, her active support of all programs advocating racial equality has led her to associate with many known Communists.’”(p. 139)

In a 1937 essay Pearl wrote: “‘in our diversity is our safety.... Ours is the only safe country in the world today, because we cannot be organized and regimented into any simple opposing forces. We all have a right here, for America from the beginning has had all peoples, and her future depends on us all. We should teach our children that there is no final America yet, that they are making America too.’” (Pp. 139-140)

In chapter fourteen of the book Dr. Sherk elaborates on the reasons and process of founding Welcome House, an adoption agency for Amerasian children.

In the Epilogue of his book Dr. Sherk provides an intimate look at the private Pearl S. Buck. He said that she “‘was a very private person and seldom let anyone into the world of her mind. She once shared with some of us the following thoughts: ‘I really seldom care to go visiting. I’d rather stay at home. When I’m invited somewhere, I try to leave as much of myself here at home as possible. I do not take my problems with me.’” (p. 187)

“Mary G. Roebing, Chairman Emeritus of the National State Bank in Trenton, New Jersey, shared with me [Warren Sherk] her reminiscences of Pearl Buck as she had known her.

‘When I first met Pearl Buck I was struck, instantly, by what I called her four Gigantics: her gigantic strength and self-discipline; her gigantic sensitivity and gentleness; her gigantic sense of humor; and her gigantic intellectualism and skill. After only a few minutes of conversation with Pearl Buck I knew why she had won the Nobel Prize for Literature. She had mastered herself.’

‘I personally do not think the world has yet fully realized the depth and complexity of Pearl Buck’s genius.’” (Pp. 191-192)

Appendix D
Peter Conn, A Cultural Biography

This is the best book I have read on Pearl Buck. I feel it gives a balanced and thorough treatment of her life, and provides excellent insights into who she was. I used this as a primary source in this section and read extensively from sections of the book. Although I recommend that you as a teacher read the entire book, I have listed below some key passages and page numbers that you may want to refer to. I would include this book on the “must buy” list for this unit!

Pages	Read section beginning with first words in quotes and ending in final words in quotes
40-41	“In 1905, Pearl’s Chinese tutor, Mr. Kung, died of cholera.... tried to discourage Pearl from reading his books.”
41-44	“She had grown from a pretty child into an attractive adolescent.... Asian and white men, who usually viewed each other with distrust and even hate, managed to reach across a barrier of race to collaborate in the use and destruction of Chinese women.”
47-53	“The women’s college was one of the few institutions in America where women were made to feel welcome.... Pearl spent much of her time and energy caring for her dying mother.”
53-73	“The China to which Pearl returned in late 1914.... When Pearl finished this first book, she was thirty years old; she had not published anything since college, and had not even written anything except letters and reports for nearly ten years.”
78-82	“By the spring of 1924, Pearl was no longer able to pretend that her daughter was simply developing slowly.... Pearl and Lossing both received their master’s degrees in Cornell’s June commencement, and then stayed in Ithaca through the summer before returning to China.”
233-252	“Pearl’s lifelong discontent with the patriarchal status quo.... the United States entered World War II.”
271-274	Eleanor Roosevelt wanted to hear what Pearl had to say about Chiang Kai-shek.... Chinese would be eligible to emigrate to the United States on a quota basis and to become citizens.”
350-376	“In the early 1960s, Pearl renewed her acquaintance with.... After deliberating for just over an hour, the jury found in favor of the family.”
381	“While I was writing these final pages.... In the end, I cannot explain Pearl Buck, cannot pierce the veil of mystery and accident that led the daughter of pious missionaries on a journey from obscurity and poverty to world fame and a lifelong campaign for justice.”

Appendix E
The Setting of the Novel

1. What is the setting of the novel? In other words, where does the story take place and when? (Be more specific than "China")

2. How is the setting significant to the story?

3. How does the setting contribute to the characters in the story and their development?

4. How does the setting contribute to the meaning of the novel?

5. Some say this is a "universal" story about the poor. Do you agree or do you feel it is unique to its setting? Justify your answer.

6. Does the setting have a role as antagonist? Explain.

Appendix F, page 1
Questions on the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution

1. Why was the uprising of 1900 called the "Boxer Rebellion"?

Answer: The term comes from a mistranslation of the Chinese term meaning "Righteous Uniting Band," because many in the secret society practiced the martial arts.

2. What were the original stated goals of the Boxers?

Answer: They wanted to overthrow the imperial Ch'ing government and expel all "foreign devils" from China. This was precipitated by a devastating drought and famine in northern Shandong province.

3. What was the outcome of the Boxer Rebellion?

Answer: Within a couple of months the Western powers had occupied Peking (Beijing) and forced the imperial government to agree to allow European powers to maintain military forces in the capital. In addition, the so-called Boxer Protocol of 1901 suspended all arms imports into the country. It also resulted in major reforms in the education system: girls were admitted and the curriculum was changed to the study of Western mathematics, science, engineering, and geography. It also opened the door for the introduction of Western thought, including Marxism.

4. How do you think life in China during the twentieth century might have been different without Western intervention? What lessons might we learn from this?

Answer: This is a question for discussion and thought. There is no right or wrong answer.

Appendix F, page 2
Questions on the Boxer Rebellion and the 1911 Revolution

5. What was the reason for the 1911 Revolution and what was the result?

Answer: It began in the southwestern province of Szechwan when the government wanted to nationalize the railway. It resulted in the abdication of the last emperor of Ch'ing Dynasty, and set the stage for an eleven year history of Warlordism (1916-1927).

NOTE TO TEACHER: Information about the Boxer Rebellion may be found Online at <http://www.smplanet.com/imperialism/fists.html>. For information on the 1911 Revolution see <http://www.wsu.edu:8000/~dee/MODCHINA/REV.HTM>. You may have students access this information, or you may want to print it off for them to read to find the answers.

Appendix G
Rubric for Evaluating Oral Reading

ORAL READING EVALUATION – *The Good Earth*

Name _____ Period ____ Date _____

SKILL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	FAIR	POOR
Fluency	5	4	3	2	1
Clarity	5	4	3	2	1
Audibility	5	4	3	2	1
Pronunciation	5	4	3	2	1
Understanding	5	4	3	2	1
Punctuation	5	4	3	2	1

Total Grade _____

Comments by Teacher:

Appendix H
Comparing the Novel and the Movie

Comparing the Novel and the Movie

Discussion Questions:

1. What were the filmmakers trying to tell us? Were they successful? Justify your answer.
2. Were your favorite characters in the book and the movie the same? If not, why not?
3. What did you like about the movie? What did you not like? Why?
4. Did the movie help you understand the novel? How? Did it confuse you? Explain. (Refer to specific scenes.)
5. Did the use of music enhance the story that the filmmakers were trying to tell? How would you have used music in this movie?
6. Did all of the events portrayed in the film ring true with the novel? Describe the scenes that you found accurate. Which sequences didn't seem to match the novel? Why? In your opinion which changes were good and which were not? Why?
7. Explain how the editing of the film advanced the story that the filmmakers were trying to tell.
8. Would you have chosen the ending of the movie or the book? Why?
9. Would you have written a different ending from the book and the movie? What would your ending be?

Activities:

1. Ask the class to take positions on and to debate any of the discussion questions.