



Area of Study

Taster Chinese and Local and Global Citizenship

Overview

This unit is designed to introduce students to both traditional and modern aspects of Chinese culture. It also facilitates students learning some Chinese words and phrases. The language element is a small and optional element of the course which can be integrated into the teaching of each topic. The unit is suitable for students of all abilities. The focus is on self-directed learning, awakening curiosity about the Chinese language and culture.

The unit was designed by experienced teachers and includes a wide range of methodologies and activities. The unit is resourced with clearly structured lessons that include powerpoint material with teachers' notes, activity worksheets and student feedback forms, videos and a list of useful websites. The unit provides ideas for workshops, project work and field trips. A strong emphasis on audio-visual resources and active learning should make this transition unit fun and interesting for all students.

Related learning

This unit is linked to the broader Leaving Certificate curriculum in several ways.

Leaving Certificate and Leaving Certificate Vocational

English: in preparing for oral presentation and video analysis.

Home Economics: Chinese diet; food science and nutrition.

Art: in exploring Chinese Art/ Calligraphy.

Music: Special Study Topic (exploring Chinese folk and contemporary music).

Business: The international environment.

Economics: Multinational companies, international trade and globalisation, developing countries and development, sustainable economic growth.

Geography: Global Interdependence; Culture and Identity.

History: Early and Contemporary Chinese History and the wider world.

Leaving Certificate Applied

Social Education

English and Communication

ICT: for research and project presentation.

Outline of the unit

This transition unit covers both Chinese Culture and Language.

Teachers can choose areas of interest from a total of 14 topics. It is not envisaged that all topics would be studied. Rather, teachers should teach the introduction and then choose a number of topics that meet their students' interests and needs.

To enhance the learning experience, each lesson will introduce students to some Chinese language.

TOPICS:

1. General Introduction
2. History
3. Sports
4. Film
5. Characters
6. Handicraft
7. Festivals
8. Food and Tea
9. Family
10. Travel
11. Economy
12. Music
13. Traditional Chinese Medicine
14. Student Life in China

Students will be encouraged to learn a small number of words and phrases related to each topic. The language learning opportunities are embedded within each topic.

Project work

As part of the teaching and learning of the unit, students will research a topic and build a portfolio on aspects of Chinese culture which interests them and will be asked to present it to their classmates. Students will be encouraged to integrate the topics with different curriculum areas and compare them with Irish culture. These projects can incorporate pictures, photos, music, performance, videos the students took themselves or artwork they have created during the course.

Unit adaptation

This unit can be adapted according to the needs and interests of students. The lessons offered in the accompanying resources should be viewed as a menu of options rather than as a mandatory and prescriptive syllabus. Teachers can choose specific materials and decide what percentage breakdown of the unit should be given to each topic. Students are encouraged to be involved in choosing the topics.

Breakdown of the unit (how timetabled)

Class contact time	35	hours
Fieldwork	5	hours
Preparing and presenting project	5	hours

This transition unit can be taught over the full school year (one double period per week) or in shorter blocks to suit the school's Transition Year programme.

Aims

This transition unit aims to:

- develop an appreciation of Chinese culture and language
- foster a positive attitude towards language learning, towards the speakers of other languages and towards other cultures and civilisations.
- provide students with an opportunity to develop team work and organisational skills.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit students should be able to:

- discuss and analyse aspects of Chinese culture video and artefacts
- show an appreciation of Chinese culture
- discuss areas of similarity and difference between Irish and Chinese culture
- demonstrate an ability to work in groups
- collect and present data in a way that is interesting and challenging to their peers
- demonstrate skills associated with research, communication and presentation and information processing
- listen to and speak (or sing) some basic words and phrases in Mandarin.

Key skills

How evidenced

information processing

Learners will access information from a range of sources (including communication technologies) in relation to Chinese culture and language. They will develop the ability to record, organize, and summarise this information.

critical and creative thinking

Students will have the opportunity to critically analyse different aspects of Chinese language and culture. They will critically reflect upon and discuss how cultures are different and also what we share in common. Students' creativity will be developed through their work on the topics of Art, Music and food in particular.

communicating	Students will engage in listening and dialogue around Chinese issues; expressing opinions, discussing, speculating, challenging, reasoning, and engaging in debate and argument.
working with others	Students will become more sensitive to the views of others through a strong emphasis on dialogue and group work. The use of role-plays and other active learning will give students the chance to learn how to work together as will the research and project work.
being personally effective	Learners will become more confident, evaluate their performance and achieve personal and collective goals by their involvement in class activities and group work experience. Learners will develop personal qualities such as being flexible and taking initiative through their involvement in class activities and project work. Students will also be encouraged to set targets such as agreeing particular words and phrases they wish to speak in Mandarin Chinese.

Learning approaches

A wide range of active learning approaches are deployed to stimulate learning.

These include

1. Classroom-based language learning
with use of multimedia (communicative approach), e-learning (ICT-based learning), role-plays, games/ songs, independent research work, Internet research, presentations, pair and group work, individual assignments, classroom discussion and debate.
2. Workshops
These will allow students to experience Chinese culture themselves, such as tasting Chinese food and drink, performing Chinese martial arts, learning Chinese paper cutting, making Chinese opera face masks, making Chinese New Year cards and decorations, watching Chinese films, singing Chinese songs. In the workshops students will also acquire a basic understanding of Mandarin Chinese and learn sentences for simple conversation.
3. Visitors
Guest performers for the workshops can be arranged with assistance from the UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland (see Resources section below).

Assessment approaches

The assessment comprises two parts:

Portfolio assessment

At the end of each topic, teachers might quiz student's knowledge of the topic covered. They can also encourage students to compile a portfolio of samples of their work on each topic.

Project work

Students will be required to research and present a project. The theme of the project can be chosen by the student. Students will be encouraged to integrate the topic with different subjects across the curriculum and draw comparisons with Irish culture.

Their presentations will be assessed by their peers using the peer-assessment template. (See Teacher's Handbook).

Learners can self-assess their presentations using the Project Self-assessment template (Appendix 1).

Evaluation methods

Students and teachers will be requested to complete an evaluation of the unit. (Appendix 2). The UCD Confucius Institute for Ireland will welcome feedback from teachers and students on any aspect of this unit which could be improved.

Resources

A full set of teaching resources to support teachers in teaching this unit is available online at <http://www.teaching.cii.ie/index.php?r=site/login>. Teachers will be required to register but registration is free.

Further information can be obtained by contacting china@ucd.ie or by phoning The Confucius Institute of Ireland on (01) 7163000.

The online resources include unit overviews, lesson plans, powerpoint slides, language based audio-visual material, cultural videos and workshop activities (games/ songs) and assessment material.

The following websites may also be useful:

Cultural Studies

<http://culture.chinese.cn/en/>

<http://www.chinatoday.com/culture/a.htm>

<http://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/culture/Language Online Learning>

http://kid.chinese.cn/en/article/2009-09/25/content_68533.htm

<http://www.chinese.cn/>

The UCD confucius Institute for Ireland

www.cii.ie

Chinese Embassy of Ireland

<http://ie.china-embassy.org/eng/>

Irish Embassy of China

www.embassyofireland.cn/

Appendix 1

Student Self-Assessment of Project Work

What did you learn during the project?

What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

What did you most enjoy about the project?

What skills did you use?

If I was doing this project again one thing I would do differently is...

Student signature

Teacher's Evaluation of Chinese Culture and Language Transition Unit

1. What parts of the unit were most successful?

2. What parts did not work so well?

3. To what degree do you consider that the following were achieved?

	Comment
Learning outcomes	
Development of students' key skills	
Students' active engagement in their learning	

4. If you were teaching this transition unit again, what changes would you make:

a. To the content...

b. To teaching methodology...

c. To assessment...

What did you learn during the project?

What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

What did you most enjoy about the project?

What skills did you use?

If I was doing this project again one thing I would do differently is...

Student signature