

East v. West Philosopher Smackdown
Summarizing the Philosophers of the East and West during the Classical Era
(adapted from Steven L Buenning-William Fremd High School)

Subject: World History/AP World History

Grade Level: 10th Grade

Length of Time: 2 ½-3 Class periods (not including previous days when various Philosophy was discussed or documents read outside of class)

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Compare the philosophies of Ancient Asia with those of Ancient Greece and Rome and how they effected the developments of modern governments.
- Analyze how philosophies both reflect and shape the culture which they come from and influence other cultures (**TIE INTO KOREAN SOCIETY**)

Oklahoma C3 Standards addressed:

- Content Standard 1: The student will analyze and summarize the impact on the modern world of the major world religions and the philosophical political principles of ancient and classical societies.
 - Compare using specific textual evidence the contributions of Greek and Roman philosophers to political ideas using selections from Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Politics, Cicero's On the Republic and On the Laws, and their impact on later political thought in Western societies.
 - Examine the origins, traditions, beliefs, and impact of Confucianism and Daoism including how those ideas and beliefs influenced Asian civilizations into the modern eras.

AP World History Key Concepts addressed:

- Confucianism's core beliefs and writings originated in the writings and lessons of Confucius and were elaborated by key disciples who sought to promote social harmony by outlining proper rituals and social relationships for all people in China, including the rulers.
- In the major Daoist writings, the core belief of balance between humans and nature assumed that the Chinese political system would be altered indirectly. Daoism also influenced the development of Chinese culture.
- The core ideas in Greco-Roman philosophy and science emphasized logic, empirical observation, and the nature of political power and hierarchy

AP Habits of Mind Addressed:

- Constructing and evaluating arguments: using evidence to make plausible arguments.
- Using documents and other primary data: developing the skills necessary to analyze point of view, context, and bias, and to understand and interpret information.
- Enhancing the capacity to handle diversity of interpretations through analysis of context, bias, and frame of reference.
- Developing the ability to compare within and among societies, including comparing societies' reactions to global processes.
- Developing the ability to assess claims of universal standards yet remaining aware of human commonalities and differences; putting culturally diverse ideas and values in historical context, not suspending judgment but developing understanding.

Materials Needed:

- Access to the internet,
- painters tape (to create the wrestling ring)
- 4 items that make a different sound (bell, whistle, kazoo, ect...)
- Projector for PoowerPoint (if not print/write the quotes on poster board)

Pre Smackdown Activities

- Students will have read the appropriate textbook chapters dealing with the Chinese, Greek and Roman developments in philosophy
- Students can have already read Platos's Allegory of the Cave, selections from Cicero, The Confucian Analects, and the Tao Te Ching
- Group students in 4 groups and assign each group one of the Philosophers and give them time to research
 - Due to lack of availability of access to our Media Center I usually assign this a week in advance so they can work at home and then give them 25-30 minutes in class to get organized.
 - I tell them the while researching to focus not too much on the background of the individual philosopher but on their beliefs on the following
 - The role of government
 - Leadership (what makes a good or bad leader)
 - Family

Smackdown

- Room is set up in a ring (four desks in the ring in each corner) other desks behind each corner by group.
- Each person in the group will bring in research that will be checked (I stamp them just for completion) those how did not bring research lose the right to participate and can only advise. All students must participate to get the participation points for the activity. The real grade comes from

- For each round one person is in the ring. They may “tag out” but then they move to the back of the line.
- The teacher must set the time for each round and be the referee/announcer—it is the teacher that brings the excitement to the ring (using phrases like “oh my body slam by Confucius can Plato come back from that blow?” –I have even used music and crowd sounds to add to the fun)
- Each round starts with a quote the first philosopher to make noise with the whistle/bell goes first and then around the ring for set amount of time (I usually do 5 minutes for each quote)
- No attempt to keep score is needed (the kids usually do that on their own) they usually just enjoy the competition. Along the way they come to an understanding of what the similarities and differences are in the different philosophies.

Closure:

1. **Discuss with students what they have learned about each philosophy, how it affected the culture it came from.**
2. **Have students write 1-2 paragraphs answering the following**
 - a. **In what ways do you still see the effect of these ancient philosophies in today's political and educational world.**
3. **Throughout the semester tie what is going on in society back to these beliefs.**

Extension:

Have students do a short research project on the one Asian Country (Korea, China, Japan) and analyze how their philosophies still effect their culture and education and compare it to the United States and what they know

Prompts for Smackdown (I put them onto a PowerPoint)

Prompt 1

- “Government is a necessary evil” (unknown)

Prompt 2

- “That government is best which governs least”(Thomas Jefferson)

Prompt 3

- “Since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved” (Niccolò Machiavelli)

Prompt4

- “The government has the right to lie to save itself” (Arthur Sylvester)

Prompt 5

- “The first duty of society is justice” (Alexander Hamilton)

Prompt 6

- “Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer.” (Henry David Thoreau)

Prompt 7

- “All power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Please do not misunderstand me. These persons who are corrupted by the process of ruling over their fellow men are not innately evil. (Lord Acton)

Prompt 8

- "The wise are not learned; the learned are not wise." Lao Tzu

Prompt 9

- "Honor your father and your mother"
(Exodus 20:12)

Prompt 10

- "People have a responsibility to take care of themselves, even at the expense of nature and one another" (unknown)

Prompt 11

- "The pen is mightier than the sword"
(Edward Bulwer-Lytton)

Prompt 12

- "Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without."
(Confucius)

Prompt 13

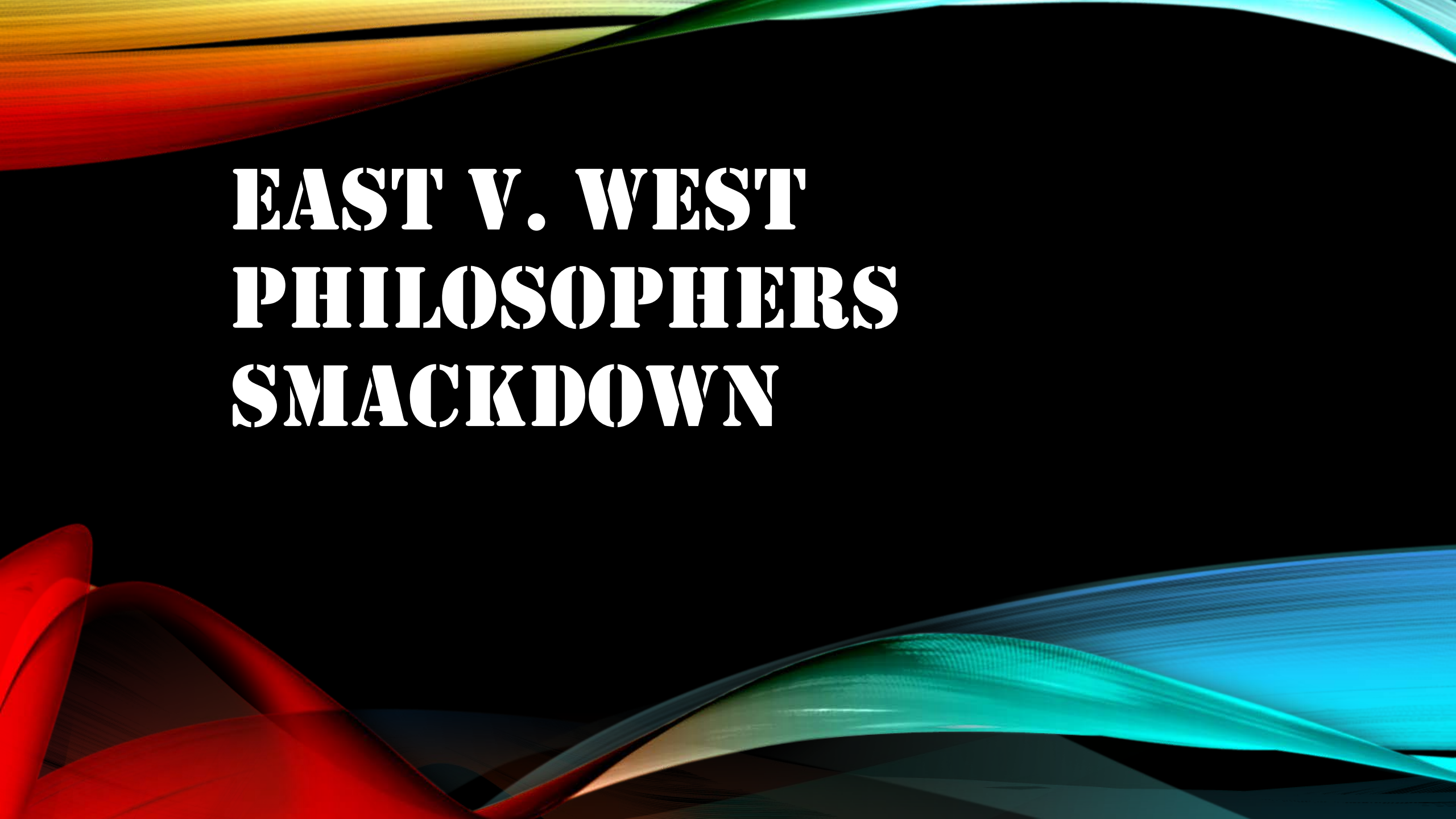
- "Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws."
(Plato)

Prompt 14

- "The higher we are placed, the more humbly we should walk". (Marcus Tullius Cicero)

Links

- <http://www.nlncrac.org/classical/cicero/documents/de-republica>
- <http://nothingistic.org/library/confucius/analects/analects01.html>
- <http://hs.skschools.net/~malper/FOV2-00104A56/FOV2-0010546E/Plato's%20%22The%20Allegory%20of%20the%20Cave%22>
- <http://www.taoism.net/ttc/complete.htm>
- <http://www.brainyquote.com/>
- <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~nsivin/comp.html>



**EAST V. WEST
PHILOSOPHERS
SMACKDOWN**

THE RULES

- 1. NO PERSONAL ATTACKS**
- 2. YOU MAY “ATTACK” THE IDEAS OF THE PHILOSOPHY BUT NOT THE PERSON**
- 3. ALL COMMENTS MUST RELATE TO PHILOSOPHY/PHILOSOPHER AND ONLY THE IDEAS PRESENTED.**
- 4. OUTSIDE INFORMATION FROM ANY TIME PERIOD (IF FACTUAL) MAY BE USED.**

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