

Show Me the Won

Objectives

- Students will research the symbols on the Korean currency to gain an understanding of culturally significant symbols.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of Korean culture by creating a new won bill.

Time

- one to two class periods

Level

- middle or high school

Procedures

- Teacher should begin with a discussion of how we can determine what different cultures value. Using the US as an example, the teacher can discuss bills and the debate over putting a woman on a bill. Another option is to use images of the 50 states quarters. Ask students to consider what they would put on the currency if they could decide.
- Students will then research the images on the South Korean currency. Depending on the curriculum objectives, this could be just the current currency or also the earlier version of the South Korean won.
- The teacher may want to put students and groups to allow for ongoing discussion. Each group can either research all of the currency or be assigned one bill to then teach the meaning to the class.
- Students should be asked to create a new version of the won based on a modern cultural element from South Korea. These can be determined by prior class work or internet research. Students should present their new versions to the class and explain the significance of all of the symbols. These new bills can be created on paper or electronically.

Differentiation

- The level of difficulty can be increased by requiring each group to research all of the current and former bills in small groups. The difficulty can be increased by requiring a certain number of new symbols on the newly created bills or by requiring students to work alone when creating their new currency.
- The level of difficulty can be decreased by allowing each student group to research one bill and then present their findings to the class. The difficulty can be decreased by allowing students to create new bills from research provided by the teacher about Korean culture or by working as a group.

Sources and Resources

- Teach Me Korean Currency: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bc-A3SZj0hk>
- <http://www.bok.or.kr/broadcast.action?menuNavild=1692>
- <http://seoulistic.com/just-for-fun/get-to-know-faces-youll-see-everyday-in-korea-whos-on-south-korean-money/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Korean_won