

Zen Meditation

Cultural study on East Asian Studies Princeton High School

This lesson was created in response to a visit to the Myooshin-ji temple and practice of Zen meditation during 2016 FPRI Educators Workshop in Japan.

Lesson Activity Overview

Because our school has such high expectations, in recent years we have seen a significant increase of overworked, depressed and mentally unstable students. Quite a few of them can not continue attending school and become “home instruction” students. In order to deal with this issue, our school district added a “no homework weekend” policy to reduce students’ workloads and stress levels. While visiting Myooshin-ji in Kyoto, I learned of Zen Buddhism and Zen meditation. These practices helped greatly reduce my stress of traveling and helped recenter myself for the next part of my journey. Through this lesson, students will learn about Zen Buddhism and Zen meditation and will learn how to do so. If the lesson goes well, I think this would be a great activity to do during homeroom so everyone can prepare themselves for the upcoming trials of the day.

Lesson Objectives

Students will read primary and secondary sources about Zen Buddhism and Zen meditation in order to understand the history; differences in China, Korea, and Japan, and the benefits of meditation in various countries, people, and conditions.

Students will then explore and practice the method of Zen Meditation, especially breathing exercises.

Lastly, students will practice the 5-minute meditation every day during the lesson for 1 marking period and discuss if there are any changes physically and mentally.

Number of Class Periods

This activity is intended to be done through one marking period but if it brings positive difference I would like to continue the 5 minutes’ meditation.

2 class periods (based on a 47-minute class).

After introduction of Zen, 5 minutes in every class.

Grade Level

11 and 12

Common Core Standards:

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1 -- Reading

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2 -- Reading

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3 -- Reading

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7 -- Reading

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8 -- Reading**

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9 -- Reading**

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

***CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.10 -- Reading**

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1 -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.a-- Comprehension and Collaboration

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.2 -- Comprehension and Collaboration

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Materials:

- This lesson is designed to be done virtually from using web information
- Lap top or i-pad for research
- Worksheets

Procedure

Day 1:

- Each student researches on line and fill out a worksheet
- Presentation on what they researched and discussion based on their research
- Students practice Zen meditation
- After the meditation group discussion of the outcome
- After the one marking period of meditation practice, group discussion pro and con

Zen Worksheet

Name: _____

*Write down the resources

Zen – the word:

What is Zen?

Zen Buddhism:

History:

Essence of Zen:

Enlightenment:

Zen – difficulty:

Zen practice:

Zen in the modern World:

Zen in China:

Zen in Korea:

Zen in Japan:

Zen in Western World:

Zen in medical area:

Zen in work place:

Zen in schools:

Your opinion:

*During the class discussion refers the following site:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Begin-Zen-Meditation-%28Zazen%29> (how to meditate)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200105/the-science-meditation> (Science of meditation)

<http://news.mit.edu/2011/meditation-0505> (benefit of meditation)

http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/news/media/releases/meditation_for_anxiety_and_depression (anxiety and depression release)

<http://goodlifezen.com/how-to-start-meditating-ten-important-tips/> (10 tips)

<http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20141107-is-this-the-cure-for-work-stress> (office stress release)

<http://www.meditationinschools.org/> (at schools)

<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/jobcenter/workplace/buzzese/story/2012-07-08/meditation-helps-your-work/56071024/1> (meditation at work place)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i50ZAs7v9es&index=16&list=RDH654etTkJfs> (guided 5 minutes meditation)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwzFOf9eilQ> (Zen Buddhism)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RozWiUA-GCk> (Zen meditation)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GSMRUI9UPo> (how to meditate)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vEIXijQctIQ> (Zen and Brain)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sf6Q0G1iHBI> (Cognitive Neuroscience of Mindfulness Meditation)

Day 2: Practicing Zen Meditation

Watch the following video and practice 10 minutes of Zen meditation. Fill out the following:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jyy0ra2WcQQ> (20 minutes guided meditation)

What am I feeling before the meditation?

What am I feeling after the meditation?

Modifications: If a teacher spends only one lesson, make a PowerPoint based on the Zen Worksheet and lecture. Then for the last 10 minutes the students may practice Zen meditation.

Extension of the lesson

Day 3 ~ end of the marking period: Practicing 5 minutes Zen Meditation

At the end of the marking period, students will fill out the evaluation sheets.

If the evaluation is positive, submit a proposal to the high school administration.

