

Streaming Seoul: The Chŏnggyechŏn Project

GRADES: 10-12

SUBJECT: History, Culture

TIME REQUIRED: Two 70-minute class periods

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Access to the internet for day 1 (alternative: Teachers might print the information from Chŏnggyechŏn Stream Museum and use it in the classroom rather than online)
- Copies of Student Webquest handout
- Chŏnggyechŏn Stream PowerPoint
- Copies of New York Times article
- Copies of the letter rubric

BACKGROUND: In 2005, then mayor of Seoul, Lee Myung Bak attended the opening of his most ambitious public works project: the restoration of Chŏnggyechŏn – a stream running down the center of Seoul. This stream had previously been covered with transportation infrastructure in the 1950s. Along with uncovering the stream, Bak’s project included massive cleaning and filtration of the water underneath the highway. The project not only increased public knowledge of urban renewal and eco-friendly policies, but also rejuvenated the cultural and historical heritage of the stream as it pertains to the history of Korea. It is assumed that prior to this lesson, students will have a general understanding of the timeline of Korean history. It is also assumed that students have an understanding of the economic development of Seoul in the past 3 decades (see Korea Society’s lesson on the Modernization of Seoul).

CURRICULUM CONNECTION: This lesson coordinates with Montgomery County Public School’s 11th grade world history curriculum. Unit 4 focuses on “students using the skills of historical thinking to identify trends and patterns of sustainability, conflict, and new technology that have been developing in the last half century in order to consider how they may continue to develop in the next century” (MCPS, 2009). In particular, this lesson corresponds to the objectives of lesson sequences 2 and 3:

- Students analyze global economic growth and its impact on limited resources as they consider the sustainability of modern lifestyle expectations for the expanding, global, middle class. Students consider how:
 - economic trends are developing related to globalization, including outsourcing, multinational corporations, migration, and consumer demands of the growing global middle class.
 - the rising economic power of Brazil, Russia, China, and India is increasing global consumption rates and is reshaping global power structures.
 - consequences of expanding economies have raised concerns about the sustainability of economic growth in a world of limited resources.
- Students evaluate key technological advances and analyze their effectiveness in meeting global challenges. Students consider how:

- technological advances in communication, agriculture, energy, and medicine have helped to address some of the world's challenges, but in some cases successes have been limited or may have created new challenges.

CONNECTION TO STUDENT'S LIFE: Significant attention has been paid of late to environmentalism and the 'greening' process of cities and societies around the globe. This lesson will shed light on students' understanding of the importance of environmental projects and their role in political and cultural values of a society.

OBJECTIVES: Students will identify the historical significance of Lee Myung Bak's Chŏnggyechŏn Stream project in Seoul, South Korea and its implications for Korean culture today.

NATIONAL AND STATE STANDARDS:

NCSS Standards: I. Culture: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can

a. explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns;

b. give examples of how experiences may be interpreted differently by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference;

c. describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture;

d. compare ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions;

e. give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

III. People, Places, & Environments: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments, so that the learner can:

g. describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like;

h. examine the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the use of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions;

i. explore ways that the earth's physical features have changed over time in the local region and beyond and how these changes may be connected to one another;

j. observe and speculate about social and economic effects of environmental changes and crises resulting from phenomena such as floods, storms, and drought;

k. consider existing uses and propose and evaluate alternative uses of resources and land in home, school, community, the region, and beyond

MSDE Standards: 3.B.Geographic Characteristics of Places and Regions

- 3.B.1. Indicator / Proficiency Level: The student will analyze the roles and relationships of regions on the formation and implementation of government policy.

- 3.B.1.a. Objective: Explain how geographic characteristics and shared interests stimulate regional cooperation between governments
- 3.B.1.c. Objective: Analyze the importance of regional characteristics and interests including economic development, natural resources, climate and environmental issues in formulating local, state, and national government policy
- 3.B.1.d. Objective: Explain the geographic factors that influence foreign policy and international political relations
- 3.D.1. Indicator / Proficiency Level: The student will evaluate the role of government in addressing land use and other environmental issues (3.1.2).
- 3.D.1.a. Objective: Analyze the affect of legislative decisions on land use and environmental issues

Common Core Standards:

- RI 7 Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums
- SL 2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats
- WHST 4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

INTRODUCTION & EXPLORATION:

Ask students to create a list of state, local, or national projects they are aware that are meant to help the environment. Ask students to share this list with a partner and discuss the reasons why projects such as these are supported by the public, politicians, and taxpayers.

Possible Answers: LEEDS building projects, new parks, tree planting projects, protected forests/national parks, etc.

Reasons for support: national/state/community pride, environmental concerns, election/campaign motivations

Follow this warm-up activity with a brief introduction to the Chŏnggyechŏn stream. Explain that the stream was covered in the 1950s to make way for a complex highway system in Seoul, and despite traffic concerns into the 21st century, parts of the highway were deconstructed in order to restore the stream down the center of Seoul. Ask students what this type of project might reveal about Seoul and the political and cultural climate of Korea, then explain that they will explore the stream in detail through a webquest.

Possible Answers: Seoul is willing to dedicate resources to the environment – this might indicate a surplus or resources to invest in this type of project; this may reflect a cultural value of appreciation for environmental causes, etc.

PROCEDURE:

Day 1: [Webquest](#)

1. Create a timeline of the Chŏnggyechŏn stream after reviewing the sections on “Origins,” “Dredging,” “Japanese Rule,” and “After the 1950s.”

2. Use the section on “Culture” and “Peoples’ Lives” to answer the following question in 3-5 sentences: How does the Chŏnggyechŏn stream reflect the life and culture of the people of Seoul?
3. Pick one bridge under “Relics” and explain its historical significance.
4. Lastly, read through the “Achievements” section. How was the Chŏnggyechŏn stream restoration project beneficial to the people of Seoul? Are there any drawbacks to its restoration?

Day 2: Begin class by playing one of the contest-winning songs about Chŏnggyechŏn found [here](#): while also showing the PowerPoint of Chŏnggyechŏn images. Ask students to engage in an activator question:

Why was such pomp and circumstance demonstrated for the opening of this restored stream? What did it symbolize for Seoul?

Possible Answers: The stream symbolized an achievement for Seoul that set them apart from other cities around the world; the stream symbolized a rebirth in Korea from their often difficult past; the stream symbolized achievement and innovation unmatched around the world, etc.; the celebrations were conducted to draw attention to South Korea and her achievement; the celebrations emphasized the symbolic nature of the stream, etc.

Show [this](#) clip from the PBS documentary “e².” Ask students to identify what Chŏnggyechŏn means for environmentalists. Would the reconstruction of this stream be considered an environmental achievement? Why or why not?

Finally, read the New York Times [article](#) as a class. Discuss how Lee Myung Bak’s career and policies are a reflection of Korean culture in the 21st century.

Possible Answers: Bak’s career has been ambitious, a reflection of Korean cultural values towards education, volunteerism, and hard work; the ‘greening of Seoul’ reflects Korea’s need to demonstrate strength and prowess to the rest of the world – nowhere else is this as evident as in Seoul.

ASSESSMENT: Ask students to write a letter to a government official advocating or refuting the need for public works projects like Chŏnggyechŏn in America. What might a project such as this do for American morale or culture in your own city? Teachers will assess student work using the attached rubric.

RESOURCES:

Sang-Hun, Choe. "Seoul's mayor shows his green streak - The New York Times." *The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia*. New York Times, 25 July 2005.

Web. 30 Aug. 2011. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/24/world/asia/24iht-mayor11.html?pagewanted=2>>.

"Chŏnggyechŏn Museum." Chŏnggyechŏn Museum, n.d. Web. 30 Aug. 2011.

<<http://english.sisul.or.kr/grobal/cheonggye/eng/WebContent/index.html>>.

Student Handout: Chŏnggyechŏn Webquest

Directions: Go to <http://english.sisul.or.kr/grobal/cheonggye/eng/WebContent/index.html>

Step 1: Create a timeline of the Chŏnggyechŏn stream after reviewing the sections on “Origins,” “Dredging,” “Japanese Rule,” and “After the 1950s.”

Step 2: Use the section on “Culture” and “Peoples’ Lives” to answer the following question in 3-5 sentences: How does the Chŏnggyechŏn stream reflect the life and culture of the people of Seoul?

Step 3: Pick one bridge under “Relics” and explain its historical significance.

Step 4: Lastly, read through the “Achievements” section. How was the Chŏnggyechŏn stream restoration project beneficial to the people of Seoul? Are there any drawbacks to its restoration?

Letter Rubric

Scoring:

- 5: Proficient: A high degree of competence
- 4: Capable: An above average degree of competence
- 3: Satisfactory: A satisfactory degree of competence
- 2: Emerging: A limited degree of competence
- 1: Beginning: No key elements are adequately developed

1. Reflects an understanding of the Chǒnggyechǒn project ___/5
 2. Reflects an accurate understanding of Korean culture ___/5
 3. Reflects an accurate understanding of American culture ___/5
 4. Provides insight into political policies and their impact on urban development ___/5
- Total Score: ____/20







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