



# RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

## **M.Ed. In TESL Program Country Informational Reports**

Produced by Graduate Students in the M.Ed. In TESL Program  
In the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development

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# **Informational Report: China**

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# ★ Location

**\*China is located in East Asia**

**\*Borders Russia, Mongolia and India; bounded on the East by the China Sea**

**\*China is the world's most populated country with an estimated 1.3 billion people**



(Flaitz 2003)

(Image: Mabry Online 2012)

# Literacy and Poverty Rates

- **As of 2010 the literacy rate in China is 97% with 95% of females literate and 99% of males literate.**
- **A literate person in China is defined as one who can recognize more than 1500 Chinese characters**
- **China has over 120 million people living below the poverty line; an estimated 13.4% of the country's population**

**{CIA 2012}**

# **Ethnicity, Language, and Religion**

- **92% Han Chinese and 8% representing 55 minorities**
- **Mandarin Chinese is the official language however Mongolian, Tibetan, Miao, Tai, Uygur, Kazak and various other dialects are spoken in regions throughout the country**
- **93% a combination of Buddhist, Confucianism and Taoism; 7% other includes various types of Christians, Muslims and Jews**
- **{Culture Crossing 2012}**

# **Important Political Information**

- **In 1949 after nearly 20 years of civil war the Communist party defeated the Nationalists proclaiming the founding of the People's Republic of China**
- **Tibet unwillingly became a part of China in 1950; violence and uprising in Tibet continues to this day**
- **In 1979 China imposed one-child policy in an effort to curb the population growth**
- **In 2011 China overtook Japan to become the world's second largest economy**

**(BBC 2012)**

# **Education Policy**

- **In China education is considered a right and an obligation. In order to maintain its powerful presence in the world China must educate their young**
- **Education promotes a socialist worldview**
- **School is mandated until the age of 15**
- **Despite vast rural areas China continues to expand their education system even to adults.**
- **China encourages their workforce to pursue degrees in higher education**

**(Flaitz 2003)**

# Schools and Curriculum

Level	Age/Grade	Required	Class Size
Preschool and Kindergarten	Ages 3-5	No	50-60
Elementary	Ages 6-12 Grades 1-6	Yes	50-60
Middle	Ages 12-15 Grades 7-9	Yes through 15	50-60 in a cohort
High	Ages 15-18 Grades 10-12	No	50-60 in a cohort
University	Ages 18-22	No	20-30

**\*The school year in China typically runs from September to July. However summer break is usually spent in summer classes or studying for exams. The average school day is from 7:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.**

**\*The curriculum includes math, social studies, science, morality, politics, music, art, and foreign language (Flaitz 2003)**



# Teaching Style

- **Classes in China are large, with 50-60 students in each, therefore teaching tends to be formal**
- **The most common form of teaching is lecture; teachers do not expect a great deal of participation**
- **Teachers are considered authority figures and as a result are highly respected**
- **Teachers are expected to be strict, prepared, knowledgeable, creative, simulating and are held accountable for their students' success**
- **As a sign of respect students do not maintain eye contact with the teacher during a lecture**

# Style and Setting

## Learning Style

- **Students are expected to sit and listen, and only read or write when instructed**
- **Students work hard and graciously accept any and all work assigned**
- **Grueling exams are an essential part of the curriculum**
- **Greatly enjoy classroom competition and performing**

## Instructional Setting

- **Textbooks are provided by the school however parents must buy any other additional materials required**
- **In many rural schools there is a lack of technology. In some areas electricity shutdowns occur regularly**

(Flaitz 2003)

# Relationships

## Student-Teacher Relationships

- \*Teachers send home notes to children who misbehave; this is considered shameful**
- \*Some teachers develop close relationships with students and become very involved in their personal lives.**
- \*Students show constant respect and affect for their teachers. They will go out of their way to aid the teacher in day to day activities.**
- \*Students look to teachers for guidance**

## Student-Student Relationships

- \*Since students remain in a cohort they tend to form close bonds with their classmates**
  - \*Student leaders are elected. Their job is to provide advice and guidance to their peers**
- (Flaitz 2003)**

**(Image: Word Press 2010)**



# Chinese Culture

\*Chinese value hard work, sacrifice, personal accountability, and self-discipline.

\*Learning for the sake of learning motivates both young and old

\*The Chinese have a cultural concept called the iron triangle. Work, home and the State are the backbone of their lives

\*Value placed on the collective whole rather than the individual. Individualism is considered selfish.

\*Cooperation is the key to strength and endurance

\*Respect for the elderly is vital

(Flaitz 2003)

(Image: Prisqua 2011)



# **Chinese Views and Attitudes**

## **Views of English**

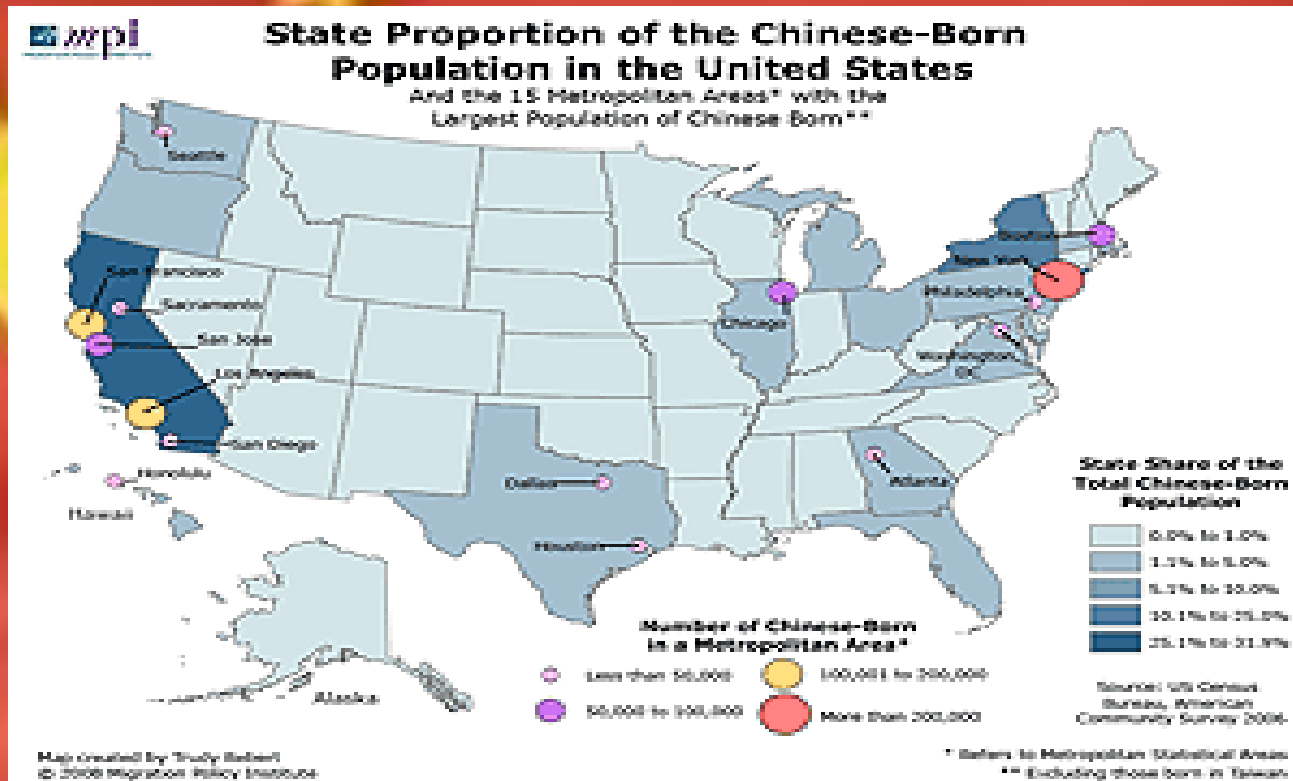
- \*Beginning 2001 English was taught from primary school**
- \*The use of English textbooks and television is encouraged**
- \*Learning English is a long-term goal in China. They feel it is essential and a way to enhance the cultural and educational quality of their people.**

## **Views of the U.S.A.**

- \*The U.S.A. is a valuable trading partner**
- \*Even though many Chinese have an unfavorable view of the U.S.A. they remain fascinated and influenced by American culture**

**(Qiang 2002 and Facts and Details)**

# Immigration to the United States



- \*In 2006 the Chinese became the third largest immigrant group in the U.S.; with 1.6 million China born living throughout the United States
  - \*Half of the immigrants from China have settled in New York and California. Massachusetts, Georgia, Texas, New Jersey and Illinois also have a large Chinese immigrant population.
- (Image and Facts courtesy of Migration Information Source)

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