

TITLE: Kundun

OVERVIEW: Students view the film Kundun to learn of the life of The Dalai Lama and the recent history of Tibet.

SUBJECT AREA / GRADE LEVEL: Civics and Government, History 7/12

STATE CONTENT STANDARDS / BENCHMARKS:

- Explain how individuals, groups, and international organizations influence government.
- Understand relationships among events, issues, and developments in different spheres of human activity.

OBJECTIVES: The student will demonstrate the ability to...

- know and understand the life of The Dalai Lama.
- know and understand the historical events that led to Tibet's current status.
- know and appreciate some of the cultural practices of the people of Tibet.

MATERIALS:

- Copy of videotape Kundun (Please note: The length of this film is 2:20. More than one class period will be needed to complete this lesson.)
- Copy of study guide questions to accompany the video.

PRESENTATION STEPS:

- 1) Initiate a brief class discussion asking students "What do you know about The Dalai Lama?" and "What do you know about Tibet?"
- 2) Introduce the video Kundun by explaining that this is a film approved by the current Tibet-Government-In-Exile. The opening of the film demonstrates the search for the current Dalai Lama. An explanation of the Tibetan Buddhist belief of reincarnation may be necessary.
- 3) Preview study guide questions to answer as the film is in progress.
- 4) Stop at a convenient point(s). Discuss responses to study guide questions and reactions to the film.
- 5) Continue with the film and study guide.
- 6) When the film is completed, follow up with a class discussion using the study guide questions as a guide.

ASSESSMENT: Students write a brief essay taking a position on The Dalai Lama's decision to leave Tibet. Defend the position you take on this decision.

-or-

Select a significant learning from Kundun and write about this learning.

ADAPTATIONS: Reduce the number questions asked on the study guide.

Student can explain what he / she has learned about The Dalai Lama.

EXTENSIONS: Research other non-violent responses to aggression displayed by other people in world history. How do other such situations compare to the non-violent response of Tibetans to the Chinese occupation of their country?

KUNDUN STUDY GUIDE

- 1) Describe the living conditions of rural family of Tibet. (clothing, homes, food, means of transportation)
- 2) Describe the environment of Tibet. (landscape, weather conditions, vegetation)
- 3) What test was given to the boy to determine he is The Dalai Lama incarnate?
- 4) What is the role of Kundun, The Buddha of Compassion?
- 5) What is significant about the location of The Dalai Lama's birth?
- 6) What event is foreshadowed by the statement "Heed the warning of your predecessor, or the war will end here?"
- 7) Describe Tibetan Buddhist funeral practices.
- 8) What propaganda was used by China's government to help make the invasion of Tibet look good?
- 9) What was Tibet's response to the invasion? (Look for three parts to this answer.)
- 10) How did China finally complete their take over of Tibet? (Three parts to this answer.)
- 11) What dilemma does The Dalai Lama face regarding where he must go?
- 12) What evidence do you find of friction between Chinese and Tibetans after occupation?
- 13) Describe the meeting between Chairman Mao and The Dalai Lama.
- 14) Mao says, "Religion is poison." What does he mean by this statement?
- 15) The Dalai Lama is advised "Non violence means cooperation when possible, resistance when not." What does this mean?
- 16) What compels The Dalai Lama to leave Tibet and go to India?
- 17) Describe the trip to India.