

Text Set: China Then & Now

For the purposes of this lesson, Web resources have been compiled on China as an illustration of the range of resources that can be included. The maps of the US and China establish that both countries are similar in size, but vary in other key features. These resources could be added to a collection with books like the adolescent autobiography, *Red Scarf Girl* (Jiang), *China's son: Growing up in the cultural revolution* (Chen), *Chinese cinderella: The true story of an unwanted daughter* (Mah), or Lawrence Yep's novel, *Dragon's Gate*.

See what resources you might find in your collection to add to these. Text sets are most valuable when they are created by the classroom communities that will use them.

Print Resources

Red Scarf Girl (Jiang)

This autobiography details the author's experiences as a teenager during the Cultural Revolution. Though wanting to be devoted followers of Chairman Mao, Jiang and her family are subjected to many indignities because her grandfather was once a landlord. Memoirs of the period are usually larded with murders, suicides, mass brainwashing, cruel and unusual bullying, and injustices. *Red Scarf Girl* is no exception. Where Jiang scores over her comrades is in her lack of self-pity, her naive candor, and the vividness of her writing. John Philbrook, ***From School Library Journal***

China's son: Growing up in the cultural revolution (Chen)

Born in 1962 in southern China, Da Chen had monumental hurdles to overcome before he could even walk or talk. Mao Tse-tung's Cultural Revolution was in full swing, and the descendents of landlords, who were despised, were routinely stripped of their wealth, beaten, humiliated, and sent off to labor camps. Da Chen, the grandson of a landlord, lives several parallel lives: he excels in school but then gives up studying in the face of unbearable pressure and harassment from teachers, students, and administrators. He is a self-taught musician but also a member of a gang. His siblings, banned from school, work from before sunrise to sunset in the muddy, backbreaking rice fields. But eventually all the dichotomies in Da's life come together, and he makes a break for a new life, with higher education as his foundation for future success.

Amazon.com

Chinese Cinderella: The true story of an unwanted daughter (Mah)

Chinese Cinderella is the perfect title for Adeline Yen Mah's compelling autobiography in which, like the fairy-tale maiden, her childhood was ruled by a cruel stepmother. "Fifth Younger Sister," as Yen Mah was called, is only an infant when her father remarries after her mother's death. As the youngest of her five siblings, she suffers the worst at the hands of her stepmother. She is denied carfare, frequently forgotten at school at the end of the day, and whipped for daring to attend a classmate's birthday party against Niang's wishes. Her father even forgets the spelling of her name when filling out her school enrollment record. In her loneliness, Yen Mah turns to books for company: Despite her parent's heartbreaking neglect, she eventually becomes a doctor and realizes her dream of being a writer. --*Jennifer Hubert* --**Amazon.com**

Dragon's Gate (Yep)

In 1867, Otter travels from Three Willows Village in China to California -- the Land of the Golden Mountain. There he will join his father and uncle. In spite of the presence of family, Otter is a stranger among the other Chinese in this new land. And where he expected to see a land of goldfields, he sees only vast, cold whiteness. But Otter's dream is to learn all he can, take the technology back to the Middle Kingdom, and free China from the Manchu invaders. Otter and the others board a machine that will change his life -- a train for which he would open the Dragon's Gate. **Amazon.com**

Web Resources

A fact sheet and map of China

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ch.html>

A fact sheet and map of the United States

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/us.html>

Shanghai, China's most populated city

<http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/profiles/shanghai.asp>

January 24, 2004 marks the Chinese year 4699—and a New Year of the Snake.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/01/0123-newyear.html>

The Great Wall: A Virtual Tour

<http://www.chinavista.com/travel/greatwall/greatwall.html>

The Harbin Snow and Ice Festival

http://www.rtoddking.com/chinawin2003_hb_if.htm

Calligraphy

<http://www.chinavista.com/experience/calligraphy/calligra.html>

China's Dust Storms Raise Fear of Impending Catastrophe

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/06/0601_chinadust.html

Song of the Dong [requires RealPlayer]

http://pulseplanet.nationalgeographic.com/ax/archives/01_culturetemplate.cfm?programnumber=2066

In China, Panda Mating Season Breeds Hope

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/04/0429_030429_tvpandamating.html