

DIRECTIONS: Read through this information carefully. You will be reading and interacting with the three major philosophies that shaped China. These were called “THE THREE WAYS.” You will also read about Legalism and how it influenced China.

Ponder (which means to think about carefully) the information included and provide your BEST responses to every task.

Name: _____

Core: _____

Date: _____

Welcome to Ancient Chinese Beliefs

FIRST BELIEF SYSTEM-- Taoism:

Taoism

Taoism was founded during the Zhou Dynasty in the 6th century by Lao-Tzu. Lao-Tzu wrote down his beliefs and philosophy in a book called the *Tao Te Ching*.

Taoism believes that people should be **one with nature** and that **all living things have a universal force flowing through them**.

Taoists did NOT believe in a lot of rules or government.

The idea of Yin and Yang comes from Taoism. Here is the symbol for Yin and Yang. Taoists believed that everything in nature has two balancing forces called Yin and Yang. These forces can be thought of as dark and light, cold and hot, male and female. These opposing, or opposite forces are always equal and balanced.



Lao-Tsu

Glossary

DYNASTY: a succession of people from the same family who play a dominant role in leadership or government (the political system) of a civilization or society

YIN and YANG: A belief that everything in nature has two balancing forces.

Watch the Taoism video in Google Classroom (also linked here)

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFb7Hxva5rq>).

Based on the video, write down THREE facts about Taoism from the video:

1)

2)

3)

SECOND BELIEF SYSTEM-- Confucianism:

Confucianism

先師孔子行教像



Confucius

Not long after **Lao-Tzu** founded **Taoism**, **Confucius** was born in 551 BC. Confucius was a **philosopher and thinker**. Confucius came up with ways that people should behave and live. He didn't write these down, but his followers did. Confucius' teachings focus on **treating others with respect, politeness, and fairness**. He thought that honor and morality were important qualities. He also said that family was important and honoring one's relatives was required.

Unlike Taoists, followers of Confucius believed in a strong organized government.

Glossary

Philosopher: One who involves themselves in the study of the basics of what knowledge is all about, what reality is and the overall explanation of existence.

Morality: Guidelines that distinguish between what is right and what is wrong and what is good or bad behavior

There are **five great relationships** of Confucianism:

1. Kindness in the father and obedience in the son
 2. Kindness in the older brother and respect by the younger brother
 3. Good behavior by the husband and respect by the wife
 4. Gentle respect by seniors and admiration and respect for them by young people
 5. Generosity by rulers and loyalty to the ruler by their subjects
- If these attitudes are practiced there will be harmony among all.

According to our textbook, “especially important was the relationship between father and son, or parents and children. Elders care for and teach younger family members. In return, children respect and obey their elders. The devotion of children to their parents is called **filial piety**. Confucians referred to this as ‘the source of all virtues.’” “**Confucianism** is a philosophy of respect for the past and its traditions. Many of the ideas attributed to Confucius had likely already been in circulation in Chinese society for many years...Confucius urged ethical and upright behavior, framing responsible government as a moral duty similar to parenthood. He believed providing a good example of moral conduct to the people would spur them to act within the confines of the law.”

(<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/ancient-medieval/zhou-qin-han-china/a/the-philosophers-of-the-warring-states>)

Complete the TWO activities for Confucianism on the next page:

Activity 1: Read and discuss the famous “sayings” of Confucius below. Choose THREE that you personally like a lot. Fill in the chart for the three that you picked. Tell what the saying actually MEANS in your own words and then give a real life example either from present times or from historical times.

The Sayings of Confucius	In your own words, what does this saying mean?	Describe a real-life example of this saying or describe an example of this saying from history.
Forget injuries, never forget kindnesses.		
It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop.		
Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in getting up every time we do.		
When anger rises, think of the consequences.		
Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it.		

Activity 2:

In your opinion, what is the most important of the FIVE relationships of Confucianism? Explain your reasoning.

THIRD BELIEF SYSTEM--Buddhism (review):

Buddhism

Buddhism was based on the teachings of Buddha, a prince named Siddhartha Gautama. He was not a god but a human being who “woke up” and saw the true way the world works. Buddhism teaches people how to end their suffering by **cutting out greed, hatred and ignorance**. When people do bad things, they will get bad consequences. When people do good things, they will get good consequences.



Buddha was born in **Nepal**, just south of China, in 563 BC. **Buddhism spread throughout much of India and China.**

Buddhists believe in an **endless cycle of life – death – rebirth**. This continues forever. The cycle of rebirth is complete once a person lives a proper life. At this point the person's soul would enter nirvana which is a place where there is neither suffering or desire. This is the ultimate goal in Buddhism.

Buddhists also believe in a concept called **Karma**. Karma says that **all actions have consequences**. So actions you take today will come back in the future to help you (or hurt you) depending on whether your actions were good or bad.

What Buddha has realized, while resting under the fig tree, is that life is ruled by four truths. Buddha called these truths the **Four Noble Truths**. Those truths are:

- Life is filled with suffering
- Suffering is caused by people's wants.
- Suffering can be ended if people stop wanting things, like more pleasure or more power.
- To stop wanting things, people must follow 8 basic laws, called the Eightfold Path.

Eightfold Path: These are the eight basic laws that all people must follow if they wish to end suffering:

- To **know** the truth
- To **intend** to resist evil
- To **not** say anything to hurt others
- To **respect** life, property, and good morals
- To **work** at a job that does not injure others
- To **try to free one's mind** from evil
- To **be in control** of one's feelings and thoughts
- To **practice appropriate** forms of **concentration, or thinking**

Activity 1 for Buddhism: Select one of the eight basic laws in the Eightfold Path. Explain below how following that law would end suffering.

FOURTH BELIEF SYSTEM--Legalism

Definition: The definition of Legalism is simply that the interest of the ruling class is much more important than the interest of the common people. Legalists strive for a strong, central government that holds absolute power and control over the people by the threat of extreme and harsh punishment. In history, many people have been labeled legalists.

First Emperor Qin was a legalist. In ancient China, Qin accomplished an amazing amount of change. He united China. He built the great wall. He organized a system of weights and measures. He established laws that were the same for all people. But, he did not accomplish things kindly. Much of his rule was cruel. "For over 200 years the people of China experienced **war** as their daily reality and a legalistic approach to trying to control people's worst impulses - controlling people through the threat of severe punishment for doing wrong - would have seemed like the best way to deal with the chaos." (<https://www.ancient.eu/Legalism/>) It was illegal to whine about Qin's government. If you said that things could improve, you could be put to death. Emperor Qin was a legalist and ran his dynasty with absolute control and extreme and harsh punishment.

Justification: The justification of legalists is that legalists believe man will always look out for himself first, and thus, man is evil by nature. Legalists believe the only way to control an evil man is with the threat of violence and punishment.

To sum it up: Beliefs of Legalists

- Legalists believe in strict laws
- Legalists believe in harsh punishment
- Legalists believe in firm management
- Legalists believe these things are needed because people are naturally bad.

Converting Beliefs into Action: To convert legalistic beliefs into action might read something like this:

- You can obtain obedience by using government institutions to control.
- You can control people's actions with laws and harsh punishments.
- You can gain obedience to these laws by encouraging people to spy on each other, and to report any wrongdoing they see to someone in authority. That authority then is to reward the informer and to punish the wrongdoer severely.

(information taken from <https://china.mrdonn.org/legalism.html>)

Activity 1 for Legalism: Explain why legalism could be seen as a positive philosophy.

Review your packet, and then ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS in COMPLETE sentences, please:

How do you think religion shaped the everyday lives of the ancient Chinese people?

What do these philosophies/religions have to do with running a country or civilization?

What similarities come to mind between Ancient Chinese Religion and the religions of Ancient India, Mesopotamia and Egypt?

GLUE BELOW THIS LINE