

Summary Description

This is the fourth in a series of 12 lessons that introduces the student to Asian American history.

Learning Objectives

To learn about the 12 animal signs of Chinese astrology.

Approximate Time for Lesson

60 minutes

Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

References:

"Chinese Zodiac", TravelChinaGuide.com -

http://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/social_customs/zodiac/

"Chinese Zodiac - Your Guide to the Chinese Astrology" - <http://www.chinesezodiac.com/index.php>

Materials Needed

1. Chinese Zodiac Coloring Worksheet
2. Crayons

Preparation

Make sure you have the coloring worksheet printed out before starting this lesson.

Script

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: We learned in our last lesson that the Chinese were very hard workers who wanted a better life. These Chinese went to California during the Gold Rush to find gold. After the Gold Rush, they helped build the Transcontinental Railroad, the railroad that connected the left side of the country to the right side. The Chinese also helped make farms and grow food for the left side of the country. Today, we're going to learn something really fun - it's something that the Chinese people created and brought over from their country called the Chinese Zodiac.

Lesson (50 minutes)

1. Teacher: A very long time ago, the Chinese people believed that the way you behave was already decided by the year you were born. They made up 12 different kinds of behaviors for people and so that they can remember the behaviors, they made up 12 different animal signs, one for each kind of behavior - actually, the 12 different kinds of behaviors will remind you of the way those animals are themselves - and the Chinese people thought that since WE are also animals (yes, we are animals, too), that we act like those animals in some ways! For example, the dog is an animal sign - if you were born in a year of the dog, then you were loyal and honest, kind of like how a

dog really is like! Would you like to know all the kinds of animal signs? [Get positive response from Student].

2. Teacher: OK - first, it's easier for me to explain with this handout. [Give the Student the Chinese Zodiac Coloring Worksheet].
3. Teacher: See all the kinds of animals? I'm sure you can help me with naming each animal, but first, let's start with the sign of the rat - here. [Point to the sign of the rat in the coloring worksheet].
4. Teacher: If you had to tell someone how a rat acts, what would you say? For example, are they mean, nice, happy, sad? What do you think about how do rats act like? [Engage the Student on her initial thoughts of how rats are like].
5. Teacher: Those are really good thoughts you had about the rat. Actually, the Chinese people thought that the rat is a good animal. If you were born in a year of the rat, then you are smart and a hard worker (because rats are very smart and work hard). But because you also want other people to be smart and hard working like you, when people are not like you in these ways, you get mad easily. [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the rat].
6. Teacher: Now, look at the next animal sign [point to the ox in the coloring worksheet], can you tell me what animal this is? [Get correct response from the Student - student may say cow or bull, but note that this animal is called an ox].
7. Teacher: How do you think an ox would behave like? [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the ox].
8. Teacher: If you were born in a year of the ox, you are patient and really don't get mad easily, which is why people like you to teach them things. However, when people do make you mad, you get very very angry. Also, there are times when you can get very stubborn.
9. Teacher: Can you tell me what's the next animal sign? [Get the Student to say the tiger].
10. Teacher: That's right. And how do you think a tiger would behave like? [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the tiger].
11. Teacher: If you were born in a year of the tiger, you are brave and powerful and also considerate of others. However, sometimes you have trouble listening people older than you (like mommy and daddy). [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the tiger].
12. Teacher: Ok, what's the next animal sign? [Get the Student to say the rabbit].

13. Teacher: And how do you think a rabbit would behave like? [\[Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the rabbit\]](#).
14. Teacher: People born in a year of the rabbit are talented, quiet, sensitive, and honest. People also consider you lucky. However, sometimes you have trouble making quick and right decisions when you are competing with other kids.
15. Teacher: Now, the next animal sign is... [\[Wait for the Student to say the dragon\]](#).
16. Teacher: Even though the dragon is not a real animal, how do you think a dragon would behave like? [\[Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the dragon\]](#).
17. Teacher: This is a very special sign since it's the only animal that doesn't exist in our world. People born in a year of the dragon are confident, energetic, strong, and like to look for adventure. However, some people may think you are a bit too bossy.
18. Teacher: What animal is next? [\[Get the Student to say the snake\]](#).
19. Teacher: Yes - and how do you think a snake would behave like? [\[Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the snake\]](#).
20. Teacher: Sometimes when we think about the snake, we think about bad things like snakes are evil. But just like the rat, the Chinese people thought that the snake was a good animal. So if you were born in a year of the snake, you are wise and quiet and a very hard worker, in fact you work harder than anyone else in the things that you want. But because of this, some people may think you only think about yourself.
21. Teacher: What's the next animal sign? [\[Get the Student to say the horse\]](#).
22. Teacher: That's right - and how do you think a horse would behave like? [\[Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the horse\]](#).
23. Teacher: That's right. People born in the year of the horse are popular, cheerful and independent. However, you don't like to listen to advice from other people and are easily excitable by new things.
24. Teacher: So, what's after the horse? [\[Get Student to say goat\]](#).
25. Teacher: Yup. So how do you think a goat would behave like? [\[Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the goat\]](#).
26. Teacher: People born in a year of the goat are smart, gentle and compassionate. Also, you are a natural artist but are a bit shy and get nervous easily.

27. Teacher: Next animal please. [Get the student to say monkey].
28. Teacher: Yes. And how do you think a monkey would behave like? [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the monkey].
29. Teacher: If you were born in a year of the monkey, you are creative and are good at inventing things. You solve problems by thinking of solutions that no one else can think of. But even though you like to invent and make new things, you don't like to clean up after yourself.
30. Teacher: Ok - three more animals to go. Can you tell me the next animal? [Get the Student to say rooster (or chicken)].
31. Teacher: That's absolutely right. And how do you think a rooster would behave like? [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the rooster].
32. Teacher: People born in a year of the rooster are talented and wise. You like to think first about what you want to do before doing it. Although people think you are adventurous on the outside, you are actually a bit shy.
33. Teacher: Now, what's the next animal? [Get the student to say dog].
34. Teacher: Yes. And how do you think a dog would behave like? Here's a hint - I spoke a little about how a dog behaves at the beginning of our lesson today. [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the dog].
35. Teacher: People born in a year of the dog are loyal and honest. Once you make friends with someone, you are friends forever. But you are not afraid to tell people if they are not being honest or are mean. And because of this, people think you are not considerate at times. [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the dog].
36. Teacher: And now, we are at our last animal, the pig. How do you think a pig would behave like? [Engage in some discussion around questions/comments the Student has regarding the sign of the pig].
37. Teacher: If you were born in a year of the pig, you are loyal and want to learn about everything. And although you may get mad easily, you do not like confrontation.
38. Teacher: Now that I told you about all the animal signs, which animal do you think you are? [Engage the Student in conversation and try to get the Student to tell you why she thinks she belongs to that animal sign].

39. Teacher: Another question, which animal would you like to be? [[Engage the Student in conversation and try to get the Student to tell you why she wants to be that animal sign](#)].
40. Teacher: Ok - now that we talked some about the animal signs, let's do an activity.
41. Teacher: Alright, now you get to find out what your animal sign is! Let's see, what year were you born? [[Get Student's response](#)].
42. Teacher: Looking at my chart, you are a... [[Use the zodiac chart in the Appendix below and name the animal and read the full description](#)].
43. Teacher: So, do you think this animal is like you? [[Engage the Student in conversation](#)].
44. Teacher: OK - now that you know your sign, color the animals in your worksheet, but color your animal with your favorite color.
45. Teacher: That was great! Now, see if you can find one other person in our family and ask them what year they were born. Then tell me what year they were born. After you tell me the year, then I'll look up what animal sign they are and you tell me whether that person is really like their animal sign, ok? [[Get positive answer from Student and complete exercise by using the zodiac chart in the Appendix below](#)].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [[Clapping](#)] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding the Chinese Zodiac? [[Engage in conversation with the Student and close the lesson. If you want, have the Student ask other people in her family about their birth year so she could identify which sign they are and have the Student share their animal signs with those family members](#)].

APPENDIX

Zodiac Chart

Using the chart below, you can determine which animal sign you are by looking up your birth year. For example, if you were born in 1964, you were born in the Year of the Dragon and therefore, you are a dragon. If you were born in 2002, you were born in the Year of the Horse.

Rat	Ox	Tiger	Rabbit	Dragon	Snake	Horse	Goat	Monkey	Rooster	Dog	Pig
1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031

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