

Summary Description

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

Learning Objectives

To have the student learn a few key facts about Korean American history and culture.

Approximate Time for Lesson

40 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:

Self-sourced since I was a student in Tae Kwon Do when I was young.

Materials Needed

1. Picture of Tae Kwon Do student in uniform (go to <http://www.flickr.com/photos/earl6m/2562753462/>)

Preparation

Make sure you have the materials open, printed and/or available prior to starting this lesson.

Script

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: Last lesson we learned about the Korean Americans who came over from Korea to Hawaii to help harvest the sugar canes. Can you tell me what "harvest" means? [Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately make the point that in this case, "harvest" means to cut down the sugar cane when it is ready to make into sugar].
2. Teacher: We also learned that although the first Korean Americans worked in the sugar cane fields to make sugar, that the Korean Americans that live in Hawaii today belong to one of the richest and most educated people.
3. Teacher: Today, we're going to learn something that the Koreans introduced to not only the United States, but to the whole world. It's called "Tae Kwon Do", one of the most popular martial arts in the world!
4. Teacher: But before we begin, have you heard about Tae Kwon Do? What have you heard about it? What do you know about it? [Engage the Student in discussion and begin lesson].

Lesson (30 minutes)

1. Teacher: First of all, have you wondered what "Tae Kwon Do" means? "Tae" means "foot". "Kwon" means "fist". "Do" means "way". And so, putting all three together, Tae

Kwon Do means “the way of the foot and the fist”...does that sound funny? [[Get Student’s response](#)].

2. Teacher: But since things don’t sound exactly the same when any language is translated into English, I think we can take it to mean, “the way to fight with the hands and feet”.
3. Teacher: Tae Kwon Do was created a long time ago in Korea when there were 3 kingdoms that ruled the land. Each kingdom created their own way to fight when you had no weapons and Tae Kwon Do was a combination of all three ways of fighting.
4. Teacher: Now, if you and I were both students of Tae Kwon Do, how would you tell who was better than who? [[Engage the Student in discussion but make the point that the color of the belts determines rank](#)].
5. Teacher: That’s right. You can see who is better by looking at the color of the belt. White is the beginning color and black is the highest color. There are many different colors in between like yellow, orange, purple, blue, green and red. And do you know how to move up from one color to another? [[Engage the Student in discussion but ultimately make the point that tests are taken to see if the student can obtain the next color](#)].
6. Teacher: Yes. When the teacher thinks that the student is ready, the student must take a test to see if she can move up to the next color. There are usually several things that the student must do during each test. First, the student must memorize and perform some Tae Kwon Do moves called “forms”. These forms are a set of memorized Tae Kwon Do moves, and there are around 20 of them. The student must perform a couple of them, depending on the color of their belt, the higher the belt, the more forms the student must know. Next, the student must spar with another student. Sparring means fighting with protective equipment, like padded helmets and chest guards. This is very exciting since both students wear protective equipment on their heads and chest and must fight for several minutes. During this time, the students can even kick each other in the head!
7. Teacher: And finally, sometimes, the student must demonstrate a feat of strength. For example, the student may have to break wooden boards by chopping them with their bare hands. Do you think you could do that? [[Engage the Student in discussion](#)].
8. Teacher: Well actually, the student isn’t just using her strength. She is also using her concentration, focusing her thoughts only on the boards and nothing else – this is something that Tae Kwon Do teaches – concentration and focus. And so the best students in Tae Kwon Do are not usually the strongest ones; they must be strong, quick, and focused.
9. Teacher: And now, let’s see what a Tae Kwon Do student looks like in his uniform. [[Show the Student a picture of a Tae Kwon Do student in uniform](#)].

10. Teacher: See? The uniform is simple, white and the color of the belt only. This is because Tae Kwon Do teaches you to be humble. To be humble means not to show off. It means to be simple and the uniform reflects that the students are simple.
11. Teacher: Now, I want to tell you one last thing about Tae Kwon Do. It takes about 2 years to become a black belt, which is the highest level belt. But, did you know that when you reach black belt you only start learning the really cool moves in Tae Kwon Do? That's right. All the years from white to black is for learning only the basic moves, so when you reach black belt, you are finally ready to learn what Tae Kwon Do is really about. And so, there are more levels above black belt, but you don't get a different belt for them, you just get what they call, "degrees".
12. Teacher: There are nine degrees of black belts. When you reach black belt, you are a first degree black belt. It usually takes one year to reach the second degree black belt level, two years to reach the second degree black belt level, three years to reach the third degree black belt level...why in fact if you started Tae Kwon Do when you are 6 years old, you would be around 44 years old when you are a ninth degree black belt, the highest level of them all! And so, while it only takes around 2 years to get from a white belt to a black belt, it could take around 36 years to get from first degree black belt to ninth degree black belt! (*note to Teacher: some serious students spend their whole lives pursuing the ninth degree black belt*).
13. Teacher: Ok, now time for review questions. Stand up and get in front of me. [Wait until Student goes in front of you and ask the following:
- What does "Tae Kwon Do" mean? The way to fight with hands and feet (without weapons).
 - What do you look for to find out what level a student is in Tae Kwon Do? You can tell by the color of the belt. White is beginner and black is the highest.
 - What kinds of things does a student of Tae Kwon Do do for testing for her next belt? Forms, sparring (fighting with protective gear), and feats of strength (chopping wooden boards with hands).

Help the Student review the materials and correct any errors with the Student.

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have about Tae Kwon Do? [Engage in conversation with the Student, research questions on the Internet, and close the lesson].