



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Uyghur Internment and Poetry

By: Kristopher Otto Hobbs High School

Recommended Grade / Subject: High School / Honors / AP Composition & Rhetoric, World Literature

Time Needed: 1-day preparation and pre-read – 6 days of student activities

Objectives:

- Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

Materials: Internet access, copies of handouts

Preparation:

1. The instructor should secure internet and computer access
2. Upload, post, or print handouts
Student Handout #1 – Venn Diagram – could be collected for assessment
Student Handout #2 – Essay Outline - could be collected for assessment
On-line Resources
3. Group students (or pair-share) considering combinations for instructional effectiveness

4. Handouts may be collected for formative assessments
5. Students should have background knowledge in summarizing, finding important details, figurative language, making comparisons, self-paced internet research, what constitutes good research, analysis writing

Directions:

Day 1: Introduction

1. Students would be interested to know that this lesson was written by Mr. Otto, who attended a lecture by Josh Freeman (biography here <https://scholar.princeton.edu/jfreeman/home>) in Almaty, Kazakhstan, during a Fulbright Hays Group Project Abroad trip (Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan). Dr. Freeman is a scholar and poetry translator who researches the cultural history of the transborder Uyghur nation. A short video of that trip edited by a former student of Mr. Otto's is here (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8monFon7Pc>).

2. Introduce the lesson with news videos. Examples follow:

New footage shows Uyghurs bussed across China for forced labour in factories
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx0JFgwATho>

New York Times reporter: Uyghurs say Xinjiang camps are meant to eradicate culture
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grgQuc4P7EE>

3. Distribute one of the annotated on-line resources included, small groups should look for main ideas and key details to share in a following group discussion. Initiate a large group discussion with each group reporting out talking points.

Day 2: Poetry

1. (The poems written by Uyghurs describing their plight may trigger students – consider this when sharing them with students.) Share a chosen poem with the class. Lead a group discussion – noting figurative language and details, modeling these skills for your students. Note the connection between the non-fiction journalistic articles from yesterday and the works today.

2. In small groups distribute the different poetry written by dissentients. The small groups should analyze the poems – looking for figurative language and details to share with the group in the following group discussion.

Day 3: Venn diagram and Research beginning

1. Share the Venn diagram with the group. Ask students to add detail as the instructor fills in the Venn as a modeling activity. On one side of the diagram note life experiences the Uyghurs experienced, on the other how they were expressed in poems.

2. Assign students research to find another internment occurrence from history, unfortunately there are many (this may be done individually or in groups). Students will also find poetry created as a reaction.

Day 4: Complete Research, Begin/Complete Outline

1. Pass out outline. As students complete research have them begin to complete the outline.

Day 5: Begin / Complete 5 Paragraph Essay

Day 6: Share

1. Students should present / discuss / share their findings, comparing the plight of the Uyghurs and how it was expressed in poems, and occurrences in other cultures.

Extension Activities: To extend learning in this activity instructors could:

- Students could assist in the creation of a grading rubric for any aspect of this unit, essay, presentations, etc.
- Have students peer edit each other's work
- Students could create multi-media presentations based on their findings including video, photos, and music
- Students could annotate research
- Students could take notes during introduction films, during discussions
- Students could write a narrative (letter or journal) of what it would have been like in an internment camp using details from research

On-line Resources

Tharoor, I. (2009, July 9). A Brief History of the Uighurs. *Time*. <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1909416,00.html>

Tharoor presents a quick non-fiction over-view of Uighur history from the time of the Sogdians to 2009, emphasizing the violence with the Chinese governments' actions. Because of the vocabulary and lack of exacting detail, this source would be best for middle range learners.

(2014, September 26). Why is there tension between China and the Uighurs? *BBC News, Asia*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-26414014>

This non-fiction article is organized by guiding questions, such as *Who lives in Xinjiang?* and *Has Xinjiang also been a part of China?* It contains Reuters and API photographs, as well as map, giving the students a

sense of the people and events described in the text. It would serve as an excellent introduction to the topic.

Rudolph, Josh. (2019, March 13). Three poems by detained Uighur poet “Tarium”. *China Digital Times*. <https://chinadigitaltimes.net/2019/03/three-poems-by-detained-uyghur-poet-tarim/>

A short interview with a detained academic Uighur dissident along with three translated poems. Valuable related posts follow the work.

Freeman, Josh. (2018, September 6). Uyghur Poetry in Translation: Perhat Tursun’s “Elegy”. *Medium.com*. <https://medium.com/fairbank-center/uyghur-poetry-in-translation-perhat-tursuns-elegy-902a58b7a0aa>

Freeman, a Ph.D. Candidate in Inner Asian and Altaic Studies at Harvard University, introduces and presents a translation of Uyghur poet Perhat Tursun’s “Elegy.”

Freeman, Josh. (2016, March). Uyghur Modernist Poetry: Three Contemporary Writers. *Words Without Borders.org*. <https://www.wordswithoutborders.org/article/march-2016-introduction-new-uyghur-poetry-joshua-l-freeman>

Freeman presents three modern Uyghur poets, with links to their works.

Freeman, Josh. (2020). Translations. *Scholar.Princeton.edu*. <https://scholar.princeton.edu/jfreeman/translations>

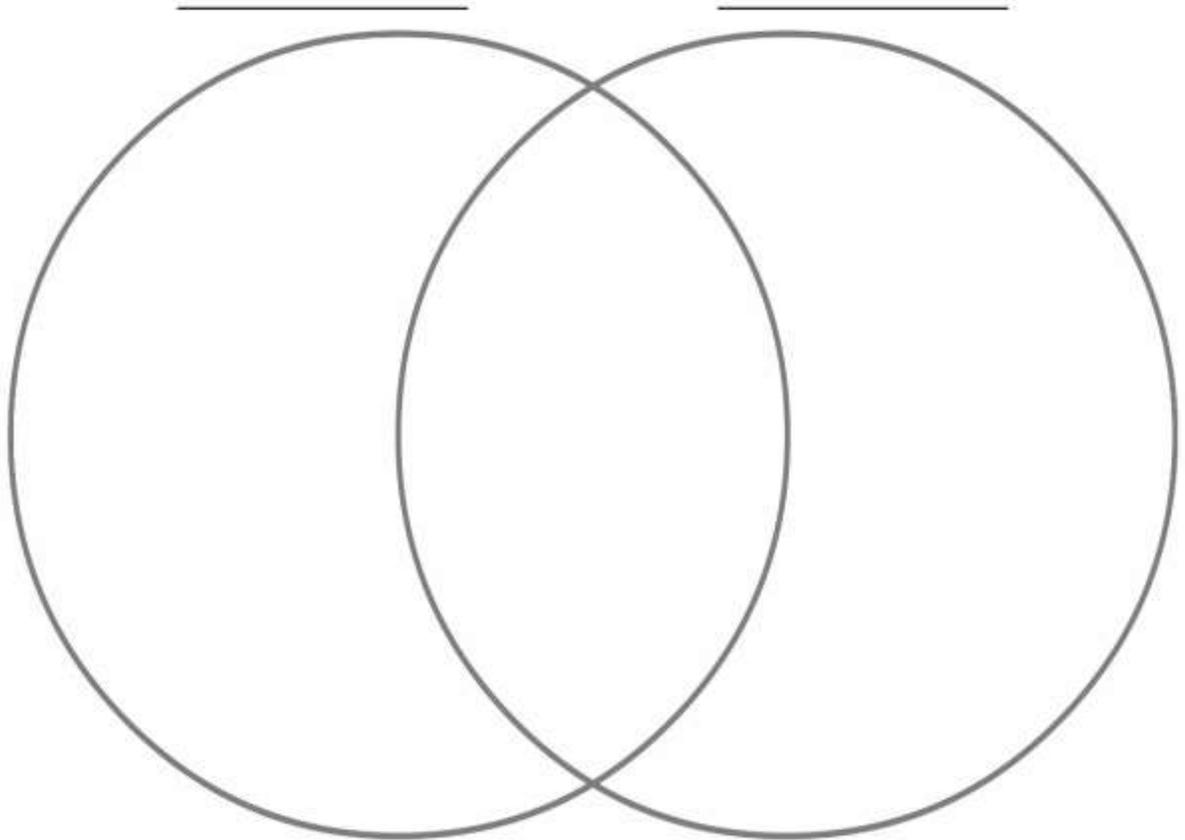
[An additional resource] Various works translated by Josh Freeman.

Byler, Darren. (2019, March 6). ‘The night is thick’: Uyghur poets respond to the disappearance of their relatives. *Supchina.com*. <https://supchina.com/2019/03/06/uyghur-poets-respond-to-the-disappearance-of-their-relatives/>

Artwork, video, and poems express the pain, sorrow, and survivors guilt surrounding the Uyghur experiences in internment camps.



Venn Diagram



Essay Outline Handout

Introduction Paragraph

1. Topic Sentence (the hook – catch your reader’s attention)

2. General Information about body paragraph 1

3. General Information about body paragraph 2

4. Thesis Statement > 1 sentence that sums up your entire paper – the over-all idea the body paragraphs prove or support >

Body Paragraph 1

1. Topic sentence – about this portion of the research, the over-arching idea that supports your thesis statement from this topic

2. Support Sentence 1 - Example or facts that support your topic sentence and the thesis

3. Commentary – your explanation of how the examples and facts relate to the topic sentence

4. Support Sentence 2 - Example or facts that support your topic sentence and the thesis

Body Paragraph 2

1. Topic sentence – about this portion of the research, the over-arching idea that supports your thesis statement from this topic

2. Support Sentence 1 - Example or facts that support your topic sentence and the thesis

3. Commentary – your explanation of how the examples and facts relate to the topic sentence

4. Support Sentence 2 - Example or facts that support your topic sentence and the thesis

Conclusion Paragraph

5 sentences – complete your essay – no new information – relates, but does not repeat thesis – completes your thoughts, argument
