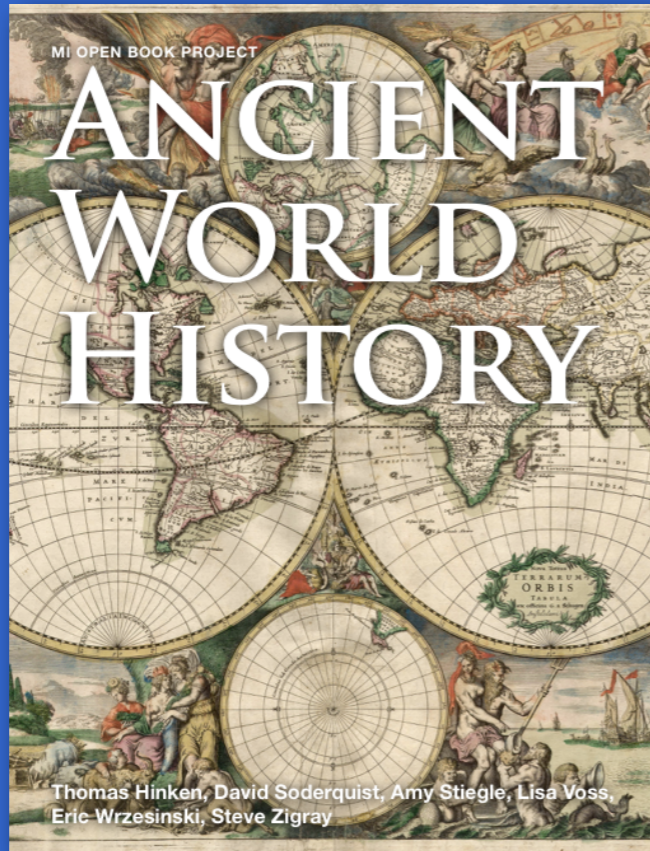


MI OPEN BOOK PROJECT

# ANCIENT WORLD HISTORY

Thomas Hinken, David Soderquist, Amy Striegle, Lisa  
Voss, Eric Wrzesinski, Steve Zigray



This is version 1.1.4 of this resource, released in August 2018.

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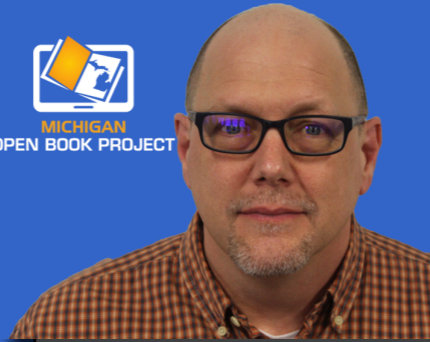
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Eric Hemenway - Director of Repatriation, Archives and Records, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

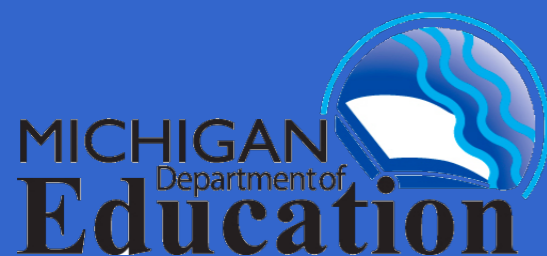
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David Klemm is the Social Studies and Special Projects Consultant for the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD), serving 12 local school districts and numerous charters and private schools. While spending most of his time with the Social Sciences, he also works with Art, Music, World Language and Physical Education teachers. He has successfully directed two Teaching American History grants, coordinated We the People and Project Citizen programs, developed companion materials for the award-winning film documenting African-American migration to the Muskegon area, "Up from the Bottoms: The Search for the American Dream," worked with community development partners including the Michigan Humanities Council's Prime Time Family Reading Program, made numerous state and national presentations and worked with individual schools and teachers on curriculum, instruction and assessment. Mr. Klemm is a charter member of the Board of Directors of the Muskegon Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and currently serves on the National Council for the Social Studies Board of Directors. Prior to his current position at the Muskegon Area ISD, Mr. Klemm taught high school U. S. History for 15 years and served 3 years as

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# What are the Most Important Lasting Impacts of Early Civilizations?

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1. How do modern civilizations compare to ancient civilizations?
2. Why were the founders of the United States so deeply influenced by ancient Greece and Rome?
3. What has been the lasting impact of Christianity from the ancient Roman civilization on the modern world?
4. What happened to the ancient civilizations after they were famous?
5. How do the trade routes of today compare to the trade routes of yesterday?



# Introduction

### QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do inventions from all over the ancient world still make our lives better?
2. What principles from Greece and Rome played a part in the founding of the United States?
3. Why are the teachings of Confucius are so important to the people of East Asia?
4. How have ideas changed and moved around the world?

### Places, Terms, People

legacy

Think back to elementary school. I'll bet you can probably identify a time when your teacher had you vote for something. Maybe your favorite food or what movie to watch. The thing that got the most votes won. Those who voted for whatever came in second had to go along with the rest of the class. In a way, they lost. When everybody gets to vote on something it's a lot like the direct democracy type of government which was born in Greece many, many years ago. There are some great things about a direct democracy - all citizens get the vote. But, there are some negatives too - what do we do about the rights of the people who lose the vote?

Now think about your student council at your middle school. Students probably got signatures, gave speeches, and ran for office. You elected a president, a vice president, and representatives. This idea, where people are elected to make decisions on your behalf, began in Rome.

Have you ever passed a note to a friend (and not gotten caught)? You can thank ancient China for the paper. The whole idea of writing came from Sumeria. So you can thank ancient Sumerians for creating the ideas that allowed you to write a note to pass. It sure doesn't look like our writing, but that is where it all started. Do you love fireworks? That's from China. Have you had surgery before? The first surgical tools came from Egypt. Finally, are you a chocolate fan? That was first invented by the Aztecs nearly 3,000 years ago.

So, while you may feel little connection with the ancient civilizations, our current civilization owes much to them. In fact, you could say it is built upon them. In this chapter we will investigate the legacies of the ancient world. Your legacy is what you leave behind. It continues making an impact long after you are gone. So, the question of this chapter will be: What are the legacies of these great civilizations you have read about? And I challenge you to think about these questions, too:

- What kind of a **legacy** are you leaving?
- What will be the legacy of our American civilization?

This chapter will try to help you understand some of the impacts the ancient world has on today's world. It will be broken down into two sections: inventions and ideas. The inventions section will show you some of the most important inventions of the ancient world and will allow you to choose an invention and trace its history. The ideas section will focus on some of the ideas from ancient Greece, Rome, and China that are still important in our world today. We will also briefly revisit religions to better understand their impact on our world currently.

## What you will learn

- How inventions from all over the ancient world still make our lives better.
- Why the government of the United States is founded on principals from Rome and Greece.
- Why the teachings of Confucius are so important to the people of East Asia.
- How ideas have changed and moved around the world.

# How do we Measure Which Inventions Make the Biggest Difference?

## QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do inventions from all over the ancient world still make our lives better?
2. What principles from Greece and Rome played a part in the founding of the United States?
3. Why are the teachings of Confucius are so important to the people of East Asia?
4. How have ideas changed and moved around the world?

Places, Terms, People

There have been millions of inventions over time. How do we decide which are important? To judge the importance of an invention or a new idea, try to answer these questions:

- How unique was the idea?
- How many people did it impact at the time?
- How much did it change the world?
- Has it stood the test of time?

## Interactive 6.1 Innovations of the Ancient World



Use this interactive map to click on hotspots and learn more about inventions from various parts of the world.

## Ancient Mesopotamia

Ancient Mesopotamian inventions were some of the most important to have ever been created. They were the first group to invent large scale agriculture. Think about what a difference that made. People no longer had to travel from place to place



Source: Marie-Lan Nguyen (2009)

Bill of sale of a male slave and a building in Shuruppak. Sumerian tablet.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumer#/media/File:Bill\\_of\\_sale\\_Louvre\\_AO3765.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sumer#/media/File:Bill_of_sale_Louvre_AO3765.jpg)

hunting for and gathering food. They could now settle in one spot and build another Sumerian invention: cities. That's right.

The first cities that we would recognize as cities were created in ancient Sumeria.

Another truly important invention of the Sumerians was writing.

They developed cuneiform, the world's first system of writing.

Before the Sumerians invented cuneiform, people wrote in symbols called pictographs. Each symbol represented an object.

In cuneiform, writers could now express abstract ideas like sadness, happiness, love, or anger instead of just objects.

While agriculture, cities, and writing were the biggest inventions of Sumeria, they made many other contributions. They invented the wheel and the plow. They also created a calendar that was based on 12 months. Because they were the "first" major civilization and they were located in such an ideal spot, as they traded with neighbors much of their culture and many of their inventions spread to other cultures.

## Egypt

Ancient Egypt is a fascinating place to study, probably because so much of their civilization was preserved over time. The massive pyramids have inspired mathematicians, architects, and artists since they were discovered. Egyptians were the first civilization to create a 365-day calendar with each day divided into 24 hours. This calendar is the basis for the calendar we still use today. Egyptians also had very advanced medicine for their time and were the first to use surgical tools. The Greeks and Romans used Egyptian methods long after the Egyptian civilization had ceased to exist.

## Ancient India

Of all the ancient civilizations, India has, perhaps, the most direct impact on the area of the world where it began. The most obvious legacy of India are the religions of Buddhism and Hinduism. Today, there are approximately 350 million Buddhists and 950 million Hindus in the world. Both of these religions originated in ancient India. Buddhism has moved mostly to East Asia, while most Hindus still live in India. There are followers of both of these religions, though, spread throughout the world. These religions have both taught the importance of non-violence and non-harm to living beings and have influenced many great leaders, including Mahatma Ghandi (Hindu), and the Dalai Lama (Buddhist.)

Ancient India is also responsible for great achievements in mathematics. The numbers we use today are often called Arabic numerals, but they were created in India and brought to the west by Arab traders. Indians also created the decimal system based on tens and the number zero.

## China

When we think of China, we often think of the Silk Road. The Silk Road that was a very important contribution to the world because it encouraged trade and **cultural diffusion**, the spreading of ideas. China also created silk, which really was the engine that drove the trade over the Silk Road. Other important inventions of China include better plows, the maritime compass, and gunpowder. Paper was undoubtedly one of the most important Chinese inventions. Before paper, everything was written on silk, which was very expensive. The invention of paper made writing much more popular and available to the average person rather than just the wealthy.

One of the most important ideas to come out of China was Confucianism. Confucius was a great thinker and teacher in ancient China. During his lifetime, China was a chaotic place with a lot of fighting between groups trying to control the country.

Confucius' teachings were centered on making society more peaceful.

## Rome

The ancient Romans were great builders. They built impressive buildings, aqueducts, roads, and, eventually an incredible empire.

It makes sense, then, that some of their most lasting legacies come from the building field. The Romans, for instance, created a type of concrete - the same material we use today for building. They built roads that are still in existence today and learned how to use arches to make buildings and bridges stronger. They also created domes for the tops of buildings. These have been in use ever since and can be seen in places like the Capitol in Washington D.C.

Rome also introduced or spread ideas that had great impact on the world. Their language, known as Latin, has turned into what we call the Romance languages - Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese and Romanian. After Emperor Constantine embraced Christianity, the Romans spread this religion around their empire. Also, as you saw in a previous section, the Roman government has had a huge impact on our own government in the United States.

## Greece

Greece is probably most famous for the idea of democracy, and we will talk about that in-depth later in this chapter. The Greek legacy is actually much larger than just democracy, though.

Drama, the idea of a written play with actors acting out the script, came from Greece, as that was the most important leisure activity in Greece. Also important was the idea of philosophy. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were the most important of the philosophers. They encouraged people to use values to make decisions, to question long-held beliefs, and to use logic when thinking about matters of science. Many high schools still have students read the teachings of these three, and most of the people we consider “great thinkers” have been influenced by these philosophers. It may even impact you in school if your teacher uses what we term the Socratic Method, or uses an app called “Socratic.”

Greek scientists and mathematicians also made many discoveries that helped shape how we understand the world. Scientists and doctors tried to create a scientific theory to explain why people were sick. They felt that a sick person had too much, or too little, blood, yellow bile, black bile, or phlegm. They were, of course, wrong, but it was probably the first time people started trying to use a scientific way to explain illness. The most famous medical mind of ancient Greece is Hippocrates, and modern medicine is, in many ways, built upon his teachings. Even today, medical

students typically take an oath before becoming doctors that is based upon a code of ethics outlined by the Hippocrates.

## Mayans

The Mayans were responsible for perhaps the tastiest invention ever: chocolate! They drank theirs and it probably didn't taste as good as the chocolate you eat because they didn't have sugar. Cacao beans, used to make chocolate, were actually used as a form of money. Mayans are also famous for telling time by using a system of two complex calendars. They were the only group in Mesoamerica that had a complete written language and made many discoveries about astronomy. They had complex math skills and probably invented rubber. Today, synthetic rubber similar to what the Mayans probably developed is what is used on the tires of your bus and the soles of your shoes. Pretty useful stuff.

## Aztecs

The Aztecs were a very advanced civilization as well. They had a huge city, Tenochtitlan, that had more than 100,000 inhabitants. To care for this many people, they needed food and fresh water. To handle the food, they created floating gardens that were actually rafts sitting in the marshy water. They also created aqueducts to carry fresh water. These were not quite as impressive as the Romans, but they worked very well. The Aztecs also have been credited with the idea of mandatory

education for everyone. Finally, the Aztecs didn't invent chocolate or popcorn, but they were the group that shared those with the Spanish.

Which legacy is the most important?

Earlier we said that we could measure legacies by asking these questions:



How unique was the idea?

How many people did it impact at the time?

How much did it change the world?

Has it stood the test of time?

Take some time here to analyze some of the legacies, or impacts, we mentioned above. Which do you think has made the biggest difference in the world?

# Ideas: From Athens and Rome to Washington D.C.

### QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INQUIRY

1. How do inventions from all over the ancient world still make our lives better?
2. What principles from Greece and Rome played a part in the founding of the United States?
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### Places, Terms, People

Confucianism

To understand why our government is based on lessons from Rome and Greece we need to travel back in time to Colonial America of the 1700s. To be well educated at that time meant to study Latin, the language of Rome, and Greek, the language of ancient Greece. In fact, young students in colonial schools studied those languages just like students today study Spanish or French. They also studied Greek and Roman history and philosophy, and read great stories written by Greek and Roman authors.

College was very different then as well. Rather than studying for a specific career the way we often think of education after high school today, college was designed to make you think deeply about many things and prepare you for leadership.

There were no electives or specialty classes. Also, as opposed to today, very few students went to college. In order to even apply to the best colleges students had to be able to speak and read Latin and Greek. Once they did get into college, about half of their time was spent studying the languages, history, and philosophy of Greece and Rome.

The vast majority of our founding fathers were graduates of these colleges. They had learned about the republic of Rome and democracy from ancient Greece.

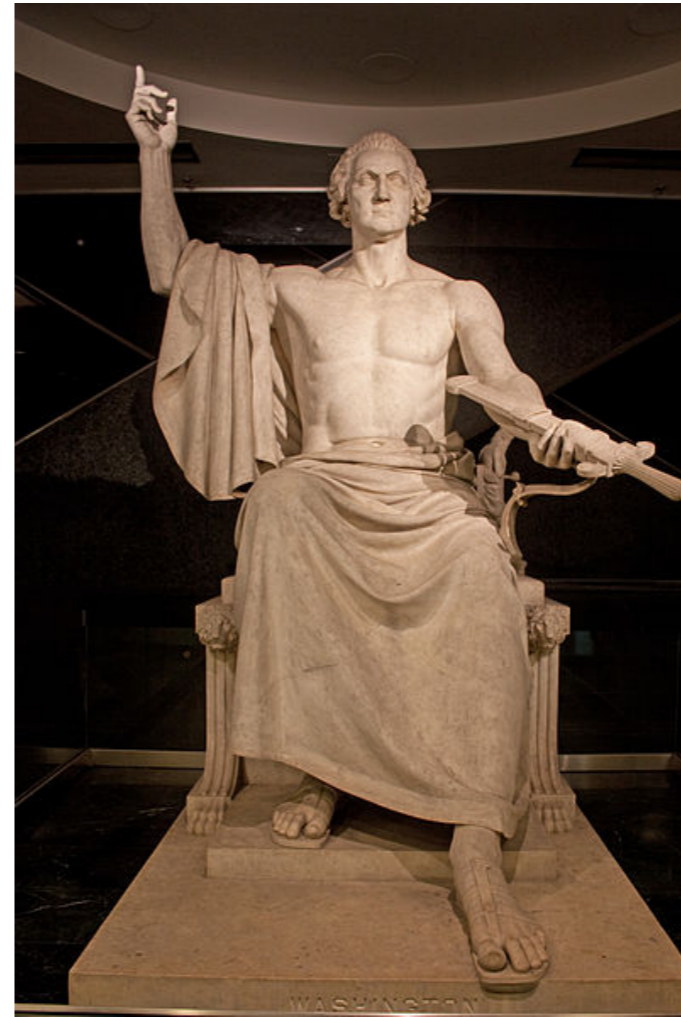
They wanted to keep the best of these systems while avoiding the mistakes that led to the downfall of each empire. They used the experience of Rome in

particular as a guide. For instance, Patrick Henry was talking about what he learned from studying ancient Rome when he said:

*I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided,  
and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no  
way of judging of the future but by the past.*

*Patrick Henry. March 23, 1775.*

Our heroes had heroes too.



source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/  
File:George\\_Washington\\_Greenough\\_statue.jpg#metadata](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:George_Washington_Greenough_statue.jpg#metadata)



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/  
Zeus\\_Hermitage\\_St.\\_Petersburg\\_20021009.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/17/Zeus_Hermitage_St._Petersburg_20021009.jpg)



Do you see the similarities in these two sculptures?  
Why do you think someone would sculpt George  
Washington to look like an image of a Greek God from  
2000 years ago?

It may be strange to think about, but the Founding Fathers of our country had heroes just like we do. They looked up to great Roman leaders and philosophers who fought to protect Rome from destruction. These Roman leaders were people like Brutus, Cato, and Cicero, who was perhaps their favorite. John Adams, our second president, said this of Cicero: “All of the ages of the world have not produced a greater statesman and philosopher united than Cicero...”



Cicero discovering the tomb of Archimedes source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Martin\\_KnollerCiceroKnollerLarge.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Martin_KnollerCiceroKnollerLarge.jpg)

So, now that we understand why Rome and Greece were so important to our Founding Fathers, let's take a look at how they influenced the way our government still runs today.

We think of the United States as being a democracy, and that is true because all citizens can vote. The technical name for our government, though, is a Federal Constitutional Republic. A federal government is one in which power is broken up between a national government and smaller governments. In our case, the states. A constitutional government is one that has to follow certain rules that are usually written down. Finally, a republic is a government where people vote for elected officials to represent them.

Rome and Greece impacted each of these decisions. First, one of the reasons we are a federal system, where the federal and state governments share power, is because our Founding Fathers had learned from Rome that when you have one person, the executive, with too much power, they sometimes make decisions that are bad for the country and there is no way to control them.

The constitution, or rules our government and people must follow, is also a way to protect our country from mismanagement.

The republic idea also comes from Rome. They elected leaders to represent the people in the senate, just like we do today.

The final idea behind the way our government works actually was influenced by ancient Greece. Ancient Greece was a democracy. Though citizenship at that time was much more limited than today, all citizens were able to vote on issues that were important to them. America is also a democracy in that we believe the power of the government comes from the citizens. Early in our history, we followed the Greek tradition of allowing only male property owners to vote. But as our country has grown we have changed so now any adult citizen can vote.

Our democracy looks very different than that created in ancient Greece. Then, each citizen could vote on each decision. Today, we vote for leaders who then vote on decisions for us. This is the Republic part of our government we talked about earlier.

Why the change? Mostly it is a matter of size and complexity. The city states of ancient Greece were much smaller than countries today. For instance, in ancient Athens, the birthplace of democracy, there were only 30,000 citizens eligible to vote. In the United States there were 235 million eligible voters in 2012. They had fewer people which meant fewer decisions and fewer laws. Trying to allow everybody to vote on every decision in today's world wouldn't work. First, it would take an incredibly long time. Also, it is really hard for our citizens to be experts on every decision.

## Architecture:



Compare these two buildings. One is in Rome and one is in Washington D.C.

Can you tell which is where? The one on the left is the Jefferson Memorial in Washington D.C. The one on the right is the Pantheon, a building from ancient Rome. The U.S. buildings that look like this are part of neoclassical architecture. Basically that means they were built to resemble old classical buildings from Rome and Greece. The basic features are arches, pillars and domed ceilings.

## Who was Confucius?

This is a drawing of Confucius. He lived in China from 551 BCE to 479 BCE, and is known as a great teacher and philosopher. In China he was known as Master Kong or Konzi. The name Confucius was actually given to him by Jesuit priests who came from Europe to study his teachings.

What did he teach?

Confucius lived in a time of great conflict, unrest, and violence in Chinese civilization, and his main goal was to restore peace and prosperity to China.

His teachings centered on one really big idea: If everybody acts with virtue, or good morals, the whole world will be at peace.

On the other hand, if people act in greedy, selfish, or immoral ways the world would be full of poverty, violence, and unrest.



Picture source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucianism#/media/File:Konfuzius-1770.jpg>

Confucius has actually had more impact since his death than when he was alive. His work and ideas were spread through a collection of writings known as the Analects. These were the written accounts of discussions between Confucius and his followers. Confucius' teachings included a lot about relationships. For instance, how should a leader treat his followers? How should a parent treat a child? Or a child treat his parent? Confucius believed that Filial Piety - respect for parents, elders, and ancestors- was the foundation of a peaceful and prosperous society.



Source: Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1426026>

## Interactive 6.2 Filial Piety



*For a sample of stories that show what filial piety was like, click this link*

## **Is Confucianism a Religion?**

**Confucianism** has quite a bit in common with many of the world's religions, but it is not a religion. There are no temples or churches. There is not a group of followers who call themselves "Confucianists," nor are there any clergy. And, Confucius never claimed to be a god or to be inspired by a god. Finally, the teachings of Confucius focused on making the world a better place and did not talk about ways to find a reward in the afterlife.

## **So Why is Confucianism Important Today?**

Over 1.6 billion people live in the countries of China, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea, and all of these societies are heavily influenced by Confucius. That's more than one in five people on the planet! Confucius' teachings impact all of the relationships in these East Asian countries. They tell how governments should treat their people, bosses should treat their employees, and teachers should treat their students. It also goes the other way.

Students should respect their teachers, and employees and citizens should be respectful to their bosses and leaders.

Confucius has been credited with helping create societies that are successful because he taught that thrift, devotion, and hard work are important. He also taught that service to others was important and that learning as much as you can is a duty. That is one of the motivators for many students in South Korea, Japan, and China to work so hard at school.

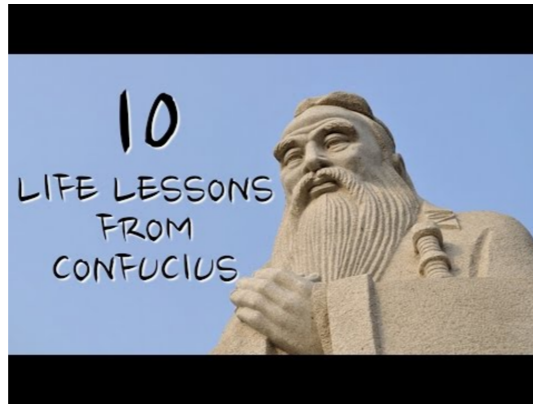
Some people claim that Confucian teachings have led to some problems. For instance, they claim that since Confucius talked so much about the importance of fathers and sons, that women are sometimes seen as less important in some East Asian societies.

Also, Confucius believed in what he called the Mandate of Heaven. This meant that rulers have a divine right to rule. Their power comes from a divine power and they only lose that right if they are cruel or incompetent. Many people believe that this slowed down the rise of democratic governments in East Asia.

## **How does this impact you?**

People keep saying the world is getting smaller. While it is not actually shrinking, what they are trying to say is that with the growth of population, trade between countries, and technology that lets us talk to anyone anywhere, we are really becoming much more connected. You are more likely than your parents to meet someone from the areas of the world that follow Confucianist teachings. Maybe you will go to school with someone from China. Maybe you will work in a business that sells items to South Korea. At any rate, understanding Confucianism will help you understand the people you meet.

### Interactive 6.3 10 Lessons from Confucius We Should All Follow



Watch this video: 10 Life Lessons From Confucius We Should All Follow.



Pick one of the life lessons to investigate.

Find a picture that relates to the lesson.

Write one paragraph explaining how the picture and lesson relate to your life.

### America's Legacy

We've spent a lot of time talking about the legacies of the ancient world. Now, imagine for a moment, that we are 2,000 years in the future. What will historians say about us? What will be the legacy that America leaves behind? Could our most important invention be the light bulb? The telephone? Maybe television?

The World Wide Web is also another possibility. As for American ideas that will have an impact, we could look at the idea of revolution where America began. Or we could consider ideas like the protecting rights of the individuals, our constitution, or equality. These are all American ideas that impact the world.

Check out the web sites listed below and use them to do some research. Then create an advertisement for the "American Legacy." Include pictures showing the most important American invention and the most important American idea. Also include a written justification for why you chose those ideas.

### Interactive 6.4 Websites for Exploration

