

Jenny's week in Taipei

Primary Lesson Plan



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Source

[School's out!](#) Watson, R. ISBN 1 86366 254 5

Learning area

Studies of society and environment

Level

Upper primary

Description

Students read an extract from the diary of an 11-year-old Taiwanese girl and compare aspects of her life with their own.

Purpose

To develop an understanding of the way the lives of students in other countries can be similar to, and different from, students' lives in Australia.

Duration

One hour

Possible outcomes

In relation to *Studies of society and environment — a curriculum profile for Australian schools*, this lesson can contribute to the achievement of outcomes in the following strands:

- **Place and space**
- **Culture**
- **Investigation, communication and participation**

Materials required

A class set of handout, *Jenny's diary* (from below)

Procedure

1. Introduction

Explain to the class that this lesson is about a week in the life of Jenny Qin, an 11-year-old student in the city of Taipei in Taiwan. Jenny is her English name, Chu Li is her Chinese name. Use an atlas or large wall map to show students the location of Taiwan. Then give each student a copy of the handout, *Jenny's diary*. Either read it with the class or ask students to read it individually.

2. Discussion

Clarify any unfamiliar words or expressions. Point out that Jenny's diary concentrates on what she does *after* school rather than what happens at school. Ask students for their first reactions to Jenny's week and discuss the points arising. Ensure that the class understands that Jenny's family is relatively well off.

3. Group work

Organise the class into small groups of three or four students. Ask each group to read the extract again carefully and make notes about one of the following areas of Jenny's life:

- her family life
- her study patterns
- what she does in her free time
- her friends
- what kind of housing she lives in
- what she likes to eat

Then ask groups to discuss how each aspect of Jenny's life is similar to or different from their own.

Finally, groups should prepare a short written report, or poster, to summarise their work before making an oral report to the class.

Extension activity

Ask students to write a diary of their own after-school lives for a week. Compare with Jenny's week. Look at the amount of time spent on various activities.

Acknowledgements

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Related resources

[Access Asia: Primary Teaching and Learning Units](#), 1996, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Vic.

Our home, 1995, Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Vic.

Handout

Jenny's diary

Monday

Today we started English classes with a new tutor from Australia. Her name is Carol. We would never call our regular Chinese teachers by their first names but Carol said it is OK with her. Her English sounds funny. It's not the same as American English, which is what I'm used to. Our class with Carol is from 7.00-9.00 pm and our Chinese and maths tutor comes from 4.30-5.30 pm so Monday is a heavy day. Before dinner, Mum sent my little brother down to the shop for some soy bean snacks for Carol. Even though we are on the 11th floor of the building and Andrew's only seven, it's OK to send him down by himself because the doorman looks after him.

Tuesday

Mum bought us new clothes for the summer vacation in July. We'll be spending most of it at Summer School doing Chinese, English, science, maths, plenty of sport and music. Before dinner at 6 pm we watched TV. At 4.30 pm there was a serial about a school, then cartoons at 5 pm. Most of the good cartoons on TV are Japanese. Our music lesson was at 7 pm, then we had to finish our homework at 8 pm.

Wednesday

Mum works at the cafe across the road on Wednesday nights so Andrew and I go downstairs to Auntie's for dinner. I played cards with my cousin Vanessa and listened to her brother's new CD. Our English class was at 7 pm. Carol makes us speak English. Speaking English is so hard, I'd much rather just read it. In our regular English classes at school, we just read and write, but Dad says I have to learn to speak it. Sometimes I feel my head is exploding with all the strange new sounds. My Dad speaks English quite well because he talks with foreign business people every day.

Thursday

The air pollution was very bad today. You could not see the hills in the distance. Taipei has a lot of factories and hundreds of thousands of cars, taxis and buses. Mum hung the washing inside today because the air was so dirty outside. Our Chinese/maths tutor gave us lessons until 5.30 pm. Then I called Vanessa until Mum told me to get off the phone. At 7.30 pm I had my piano lesson.

Friday

Grandpa took us out to an American restaurant to eat steak. We usually eat pork or chicken at home because good beef is double the cost of other meat. Carol said Australians and New Zealanders eat a lot of lamb. Chinese Muslims also eat lamb, but I have never seen or tasted it. Afterwards, Mum let me stay up to watch the ghost movie from Hong Kong (9–11 pm).

Saturday

Dad picked us up from school at lunchtime and took Andrew and me to a jiaozi restaurant. Chinese dumplings are called jiaozi (it rhymes with trouser). My favourite jiaozi are pork and spring onion, rolled in pastry and steamed. I eat them with soy sauce. Usually Dad works all day Saturday and we go straight home after school in the morning.

Sunday

Sunday at last! Mum always makes me do some homework, but it's usually a fairly free day. I went downstairs to play video games with Vanessa. Then we went up on the roof to play badminton. I wanted to go to the movies but Vanessa hates the crowds in the cinema district of Taipei, so we got a video instead.