**Confucianism**

**# 11**

**I. Introduction**

Confucius is one of the most important and influential philosophers (thinkers) in China. Confucius was born in 551 B.C.E. (2,500 years ago) into a power family near Beijing (the capital of China). When he was growing up, China was in chaos. There was much disorder and groups of people were fighting over power. There were no good leaders around to keep order and calmness in China. Confucius became interested in government and started to think about how to create a peaceful society, with a good leader, where everyone got along. He started giving advice to the princes and other leaders in China on how to keep a peaceful society. His beliefs, **Confucianism**, were written down in a book called **The Analects**.

**DIRECTIONS: Actively read (highlight/underline important words/phrases, circle words you do not understand) about the beliefs of Confucianism. Evaluate the beliefs of Confucius and generate a claim for each belief: Were the beliefs of Confucianism SUCCESSFUL (S) or UNSUCCESSFUL (U) at creating peace?**

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| **BELIEFS** | **CLAIM:**  **S or U?** |
| **The Five Relationships**  Confucius taught that harmony resulted when people accepted their place in society. He stressed five key relationships:   1. *“Fathers, show love to your sons. Sons, show respect in return.”* 2. *“Older brothers, look after your younger brothers. Younger brothers, be kind to your older brothers and always thank them for taking care of you.”* 3. *“Husbands, treat your wives with respect. Wives, listen to your husbands and do everything they say.”* 4. *“Rulers, you be good and kind towards your people. People who are ruled, you must be loyal to your ruler.”* 5. *“Friends should be kind to one another.”* |  |
| **Filial Piety**  Confucius put filial piety, or respect for parents, above all other duties. |  |
| **Golden Rule**  Confucius valued honesty, hard work, and concern for others. He said, “Do not do to others that you would not want others to do with you”. |  |
| **Government**  Confucius believed a ruler had the responsibility to provide a good government, and in return, the people would be respectful and loyal subjects. He felt the best rulers were ones who led by good example and that rulers should take the advice from wise and educated men.  Confucius said to be a powerful ruler: “If you try to be good, your people would also be good.” Confucius said, “In a good country, there must be three things: enough food, enough military equipment and people’s faith in their ruler". His student asked “If we couldn’t help it and one of these had to go, which would you get rid of first?” Confucius replied, “The military equipment.” His students asked again, “If we couldn’t help it and one of these had to go, which one would you get rid of first?” Confucius replied, “Get rid of the food. It will hurt the people not to have food, but it will kill them if they don’t have faith in their ruler.” |  |

There were several reasons why Confucius’ beliefs were **successful/unsuccessful (circle one)** in creating a peaceful society. One reason is **(give an example/evidence) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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Overall Confucius’ beliefs were **more successful than unsuccessful in creating a peaceful society/more unsuccessful than successful in creating a peaceful society** **(circle one).**

**Regents Questions:**

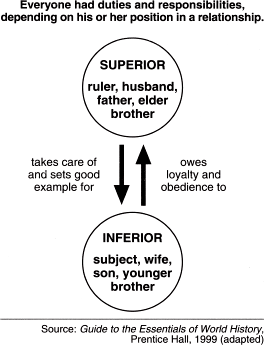
**1. Base your answer to the following question on the quotation below and on your knowledge of social studies.  
"Harmony should be valued and quarrels should be avoided. Everyone has his biases, and few men are far sighted. Therefore some disobey their lords and fathers and keep up feuds with neighbors. But when the superiors are in harmony with each other and inferiors are friendly, then the affairs are discussed quietly and the right view of matters prevails."  
--Prince Shotoku of Japan (A.D. 604)  
  
Prince Shotoku's statement indicates the influence of the ideas of**

1. Confucius
2. Muhammad
3. Genghis Khan
4. Emperor Hirohito

**2. The five relationships taught by Confucius encouraged people to**

1. improve their position in life
2. maintain social and political order
3. respect and worship nature
4. serve the needs of religious leaders

**3. Base your answer on the accompanying illustration and on your knowledge of social studies. The illustration shows the relationship between individuals in a society according to the ideas of**

1. Confucius
2. Moses
3. Mohammad
4. Siddhartha Gautama

**4. According to the teachings of Confucius, the key to the successful organization of society is that**

1. the ruler should be chosen democratically
2. the evil in humans must be eliminated
3. ancestor worship should be discontinued
4. individuals should know and do what is expected of them