

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Confucius

Confucius was a sage. A sage is a very wise person. Although he was not well known when he was alive, Confucius is now the most remembered person from ancient China. Confucius was born in 551BCE, in a period of Chinese history known as the Age of Warring States. It was a period that saw China divided into many small kingdoms. The local rulers fought one another and were often cruel to their people. Confucius advised many leaders that peace and justice was not possible without good government, and that good government was possible only through good leaders.

Confucius was concerned with how people treated one another. The great sage said, "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others." He stressed that any person, rich or poor, could become superior. The Chinese word *jen* refers to the kindness and love each person should have for all others and for nature. Confucius taught that the person who develops *jen* becomes superior.

Confucius also taught that government officials should not use family connections to get their positions. The officials, he said, should instead earn their jobs through education and talent. Many years after Confucius died, China set up an examination system that lasted over 1300 years. Students had to show that



Confucius

they read and wrote well. They also had to demonstrate their knowledge of Confucius and his philosophy. Although the Confucian examination system is no longer used in China, government workers do have to pass tests that are inspired by the old Confucian system.

Confucius believed that society functioned best if everyone respected laws and behaved according to the duties demanded by their positions. He taught that parents were superior to children, men superior to women, and rulers superior to subjects. Confucius said, "Let the ruler rule as he should and the minister be a minister as he should. Let the father act as the father should and the son act as the son should."

Despite his obscure life, Confucius left an amazing legacy. A legacy is something handed down from the past. Confucius never wrote down his philosophy, but he made an enormous impact on many people. His students compiled a book known as the *Analects* after Confucius died. The *Analects* became the model for official and personal behavior for many Chinese people. Many governments have tried to suppress the teachings of Confucius, but his philosophy remains an important part of Chinese culture to this day.

### Answer in complete sentences

\*1. Name someone in your life who might be considered to be a sage. Explain why you chose this person.

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2. Why was China not controlled by dynastic rulers for a period during the third century before the Common Era?

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\*3. In your own words, describe the meaning of the ancient Chinese word *jen*. You may not use the definition from the study guide.

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\*4. What is your opinion of Confucius' view of the role of women in society?

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5. What are the *Analects*?

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\*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.

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# 2B



## The Legalists

Confucius taught that people are basically good, but about 250 years after the death of this great Chinese sage, a group of scholars known as the Legalists brought in a different view. The Legalists believed that humankind was evil and that, unless controlled, people would be concerned only with their own interests. The Legalists believed that society functioned best through strong government control and absolute obedience to authority, so they created laws that ordered strict punishments and rewards for behavior.

Confucius believed in virtue and natural order, but the Legalists believed that all human activity should be directed toward increasing the power of the ruler and the government. The Legalists held power by suppressing anyone who disagreed with them.

China had not been a unified nation for hundreds of years when the Legalists came to power. During an era that was later called the Age of Warring States, local rulers controlled many small kingdoms.



Shih Huang-ti

The ruler of the Ch'in state embraced the Legalist philosophy. The Ch'in united China by about 214BCE by conquering most rival kingdoms. The first Ch'in ruler of a united China took the title Shih Hwang-ti, which means August Lord or First Emperor.

To stop any criticism, Shih Huang-ti and the Legalists banned all books on history and of classics glorifying past rulers. The First Emperor ordered all "non-essential" books collected and burned. He allowed only books on agriculture, medicine and pharmacy. Books written about Confucius and his philosophy were destroyed. During this period hundreds of scholars were put to death—many of them being buried alive.

The Legalists lost power shortly after the death of the First Emperor, and the succeeding rulers ended laws against books. Confucius' teaching managed to survive the Burning of the Books because his philosophy was often handed down orally from master to student. Thus, it was possible to reconstruct the texts from both memory and the surviving manuscripts.

## Fill in the Blanks

The Legalists were a group of powerful C\_\_i\_\_e\_\_e warlords who ended the A\_\_e of W\_\_r\_\_i\_\_g States and began the Ch'in D\_\_n\_\_s\_\_y in the third c\_\_n\_\_u\_\_y before the C\_\_m\_\_on E\_\_a. The Legalists believed that people were s\_\_l\_\_i\_\_h and had to be c\_\_n\_\_r\_\_l\_\_ed. This view contrasted with C\_\_n\_\_u\_\_i\_\_s, who believed that people were good. Shih Hwang-ti u\_\_i\_\_i\_\_d China in 214BC. Shortly after, his L\_\_g\_\_l\_\_st followers b\_\_r\_\_ed books that \*d\_\_s\_\_g\_\_e\_\_d with their \*p\_\_i\_\_o\_\_o\_\_hy and ordered hundred of s\_\_h\_\_l\_\_rs buried a\_\_i\_\_e. Once the L\_\_g\_\_l\_\_s\_\_s left power, many of Confucius' students were able to r\_\_c\_\_n\_\_t\_\_u\_\_t the teachings of the great \*s\_\_ge by writing down what they remembered of what he said and by using texts they kept hidden while the legalists were in power.

## Answer in complete sentences

\*1. How did the philosophy of the legalists differ from Confucius' ideas?

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2. Explain why the Legalists ordered that books be burned.

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\*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.