

**Troy Christenson**

**An Integrative Approach to Education of  
Buddhism and Thai Culture**

**Eighth Grade**

**A Curriculum Project Designed to Meet the  
Requirements of the Fulbright-Hayes Seminars  
Abroad Program—Exploration of Thailand and  
Laos**

**Summer, 2003**

**Contents:**

- 1) Buddhism and Thai Culture PowerPoint Presentation
- 2) Language Arts Assignment
- 3) Cultural Anthropology Assignment
- 4) Math Assignment
- 5) Quick-time Videos:
  - A) Elephant Camp in Chiang Mai, Thailand (Elephants Stacking Logs, Virtual Elephant Ride, and Elephant Receiving Tips).
  - B) Village Monks Receiving Food in the Morning From the Fulbright Group.

**Time Frame:** Approximately One Week

**Abstract:**

The following is an integrative approach to Thai and Buddhist culture and philosophy that was created with the goal of giving students a holistic overview of Southeast Asia. Students will gain a basic understanding of the Buddhist religion and concepts of Thai culture by viewing and hearing lectures on the included PowerPoint slides. With this information they will take on the task of immersing themselves into Thai culture from their student desks in the U.S. In addition to understanding a culture different from their own, students will also use real-world skills to convert currency and understand an economic system different from their own, while viewing actual footage from Southeast Asia. The attached documents in Microsoft Word and Excel format supplement this unit as worksheets.

**Social Studies**—Students will meet the general objectives of understanding a culture different from their own by examining Thailand’s societal mores and folkways.

Prerequisites:

- 1) Viewing of the included PowerPoint presentation
- 2) Understanding of the vocabulary words more and folkway, and how they relate to values within a culture.

Evaluation:

- 1) Comprehension of mores and folkways, as well as application of the information on Thai culture and Buddhism—40 Points (2 points for each more and folkway)
- 2) Structure of information in essay format and use of presented information—40 Points

**Language Arts**—Students will keep a journal of perceptions of the Buddhist religion and ways of life in their choice of either a monastery or in the forest, and apply principals of Buddhism to their own lives.

Prerequisites:

- 1) Viewing of the included PowerPoint presentation
- 2) Understanding of the structure of journal entries and retention of the 10 Precepts of Novice Monks.

Evaluation:

- 1) Use of grammar and spelling mechanics—30 Points
- 2) Relation of material given in class to journal entries—30 Points
- 3) Creativity—20 Points

**Math**—Students will use the directions given to convert currency while buying desired items in Thai Baht.

Prerequisites:

- 1) Knowledge of currency conversion
- 2) Division and multiplication skills

\*\*Note:

- A) No calculators are to be used to stress real world application of this exercise.
- B) The attached Quicktime videos may supplement the Elephant Ride Purchase.

Evaluation

- 1) Use of money allotted—20 points
- 2) Correct currency conversions—60 points

\*\*Extra credit opportunities may include research of a Buddhist monastery at the following website:

[www.khippapanyo.org](http://www.khippapanyo.org)

**Language Arts Assignment**

As part of your trip, you are to stay with Buddhist monks in a monastery or in the forest for ten days. Keep a journal of the different practices you see monks and novices performing, and compare them to how you live at home. How do their 10 rules apply to the things you do every day? Would living by these rules force you to change some of the things you do, or would it be easy to follow them in your life in America? You must have at least one journal entry per day (10 total), and each entry should discuss one of the 10 rules for the Novices. Your journal entries must include the time and date, and spelling and grammar count! Good Luck!

Day One

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Day Two

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Day Three

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Day Four

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Day Five

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Day Six \_\_\_\_\_  
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Day Eight \_\_\_\_\_  
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Day Nine \_\_\_\_\_  
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Day Ten \_\_\_\_\_  
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### Cultural Anthropology Assignment

As part of your trip you have been assigned to study ways of life in a Thai Buddhist monastery. You are responsible for reporting back to people in the United States and giving them an insight to how religion plays a role in Thai lifestyle. In order to do this you must conduct a field study in which you will spend two weeks living in a monastery in Northern Thailand. After viewing the information in class on Buddhism and Thai culture, it is your responsibility to interpret ways of life so that your colleagues in the U.S. may better understand this way of life. Make a list of mores and folkways that the Buddhist monks follow in their daily lifestyle. After you have done this, use the back of this sheet to compare the way of lifestyle you have just observed to that of people in the U.S. What are things that are the same, and which are different?

Mores

Folkways

1)

1)

2)

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Congratulations—You have won a trip to Thailand!! Your trip includes airfare, hotel, and all meals for seven days. Your only expense will be souvenirs and gifts to take home with you. In order to purchase these you have saved up \$400 dollars that you have decided you will spend while on your trip. As you move from shop to shop you realize that most places have the same prices and you want to make sure that you are spending wisely. In order to do this you will have to make sure that you know what each of your purchases costs in United States dollars. The currency in Thailand is in units called Baht. As of right now the currency exchange rate is 39.70 Baht for every U.S. dollar. Your first step is to convert your U.S. money to Thai Baht:

$$\$400.00 \times 39.7 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{ Baht}$$

This is how much you have to spend. You must keep track of your spending, as you only have \$400.00 and want to get as much as you can. Use the attached list of items to decide what you want to purchase and convert each into U.S. dollars. The postcards include postage. To calculate the price in U.S. dollars you must divide the Baht price by 39.7 and round to the nearest penny. Good luck shopping—remember, your relatives in the U.S. are all jealous and want you to bring them something.

Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
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Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____
Item _____	Number _____	Baht Price _____	U.S. Price _____

Total Amount Spent Baht \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Dollars \_\_\_\_\_



<b>Items to Purchase</b>	<b>Cost in Baht</b>
Donation to Monastery	????
Elephant Ride	650 Baht
Food for Feeding Elephants	30 Baht
Foot Massage	350 Baht
Framed Poster of Thailand	1125 Baht
Hand-made Bag	1150 Baht
Postcards	20 Baht per card
River Dinner Cruise	1000 Baht
Shell Mobile	1200 Baht
Silk Dress	2000 Baht
Silk Flowers	200 Baht
Silk Shirt	800 Baht
Silver Earrings	900 Baht
Silver Necklace	2500 Baht
Silver Ring	1000 Baht
Snacks on the Street	20 Baht
Souvenir Bowl	500 Baht
Souvenir Tour Guide with Map	360 Baht
Spices for Cooking	500 Baht
Tailored Suit	4000 Baht
T-shirt	300 Baht
Tuk Tuk Ride	100 Baht
Whicker Bracelet	5 Baht
Wood Carving	1500 Baht