

“A Tale of Music”

Kwi-Mi Kang

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Octorara Area High School

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Grade 12: Advanced Placement Literature and Composition  
Three 50-minute class periods

## Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to question and consider how author biographical information (or lack thereof) affects our reading of a piece
- Students will be able to question and consider how a writer's cultural and political climate contribute to his/her work
- Students will be able to closely read a text considering: symbolism, imagery, irony, diction, motifs, rhetorical features, contrasts/foil characters, and setting.
- Students will be able to question and consider how publishing outlets/choices affect our reading of a piece
- Students will be able to question and consider how the art of translation works and the trustworthiness of a translator
- Students will be able to discuss the literary value of propaganda as a writing genre

## Summary:

“During the Japanese colonial rule over Korea (1910-45), many Koreans were conscripted into the Japanese army and munitions factories in Japan, and a considerable number of them remained there after liberation. After the Korean War (1950-53), North Korea suffered from a lack of manpower and looked for ways to speed up the country's reconstruction. In 1958, some young Koreans in Japan sent a petition to the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung, asking him to give them an opportunity to ‘return’ home to escape severe social discrimination and economic hardship. At the time, 24.4 percent of Korean residents in Japan lived under the poverty line, while only 2 percent of Japanese fell in the same category. The first two ships carrying the returnees left Niigata in 1959, and until 1967, 88,000 people boarded ships for North Korea, including 6,000 Japanese.

“A Tale of Music” draws on this history to tell a disturbing parable about an artist's willing self-abnegation in the service of the Great Leader. It was published in *Choson Munhak* in February 2003. Kang Kwi-mi is a woman's name, but no further information is available about the author” (Young-Nan, Yu. Korean Literature packet; East Asian Studies Center Indiana University, Bloomington. 60).

In 2006, Yu Young-Nan translated this short story and it was published in the book: *Literature from the 'Axis of Evil': Writing from Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Other Enemy Nations*. (show the paperback copy of the book to students).

Kang Kwi-mi's story follows the lives of two brothers, as told by their sister, in first person narration. Readers are introduced to the harsh, racist conditions that the Korean family lives under while in Kyoto, Japan—more specifically—next to a railway bridge in utter poverty. As we witness the humiliation and heartbreak endured by the family under Japanese rule, we also then see a momentary musical triumph and a resulting choice to move back to North Korea. In North Korea, the younger brother's decisions are shared with us step-by-step by his sister, until we reach the climactic sacrifices made at the end of the story.

## Historical/Literary Context:

For half a millennium, the Choson Dynasty ruled over Korea (1392-1910) and so, when the Japanese occupation began in 1910, the Koreans were incensed and adamant that Japanese influences would not overpower their culture. However, the Japanese were determined to make their colonial power known and so they implemented policies such as forced labor for Koreans in Japanese factories; banned Korean language in schools (later expanded to bans in businesses and politics); forced attendance at Shinto religious services; and forced name changes to Japanese names. “Central judicial bodies wrote new laws establishing an extensive, “legalized” system of racial discrimination against Koreans, making them second-class citizens in their own country” ([http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/pdf/CS\\_North-Korea.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf) 31).

There were certainly Korean resistance movements, most notably the March First Movement (1919). And language expression became a source of showing common nationality: for example, the birth of the first modern novel came in the 1920s (Korean reader, Kim 5). Around the same time, Woodrow Wilson was at Versailles and was asserting his Fourteen Points including “respect for national self-determination [that] would reduce economic and nationalist sentiments that lead to war (<http://www.ushistory.org/us/45d.asp>). However, as history sadly unfolded, the Fourteen Points were systematically ignored, the League of Nations was suggested instead, the U.S. rejected membership in the League, and WWII came to pass. The defeat of Japan, though, in 1945 to close WWII, did finally “free” the Koreans from Japanese rule. However, the U.S.’s occupation of South Korea and Russia’s occupation of North Korea did not truly free the country. And so the intense nationalism that runs through North Korea continues.

The nationalism that so closely holds the country, reverberates in its literature too. While novels and films blossomed in the 1920s as a way for Koreans to maintain a national identity, the North Koreans took this nationalism to extremes. There is The People’s Study Hall in Pyongyang where only the elite are allowed to read and only about 100 titles have been approved; the idea that there is a literary underground is not the case; the goals of propaganda dictate over any other literary agenda; and writers’ identities are intentionally unknown so as to glorify only the state, not the writer (<http://publishingperspectives.com/2010/02/frogs-in-a-well-literary-life-in-north-korea/> ).

Knowing these conflicting and sometimes ambiguous purposes, reminds us that when reading North Korean literature, not only must we remind ourselves of the cultural gaps we are responsible for filling, but also that the art of translation influences our reading of a text too. As Shirley Lee says in “Reclaiming North Korean Literature”, “Not only is the language of North Korean literature enmeshed in its distinctive and poorly understood sociopolitical context, but it is severely constrained to serve a narrow political purpose, grinding unpleasantly with our outsiders' sense of the role we think literature should play” (<http://wordswithoutborders.org/dispatches/article/reclaiming-north-korean-literature#ixzz3hkc3Ty7t> ).

Implicit within her statement are three crucial responsibilities: we should strive to better understand the sociopolitical context of the works we read; we must recognize the severe constraints placed on writers and consider how these work; and lastly, we must practice

metacognition and note our own assumptions about how we think literature should operate in a society.

### Discussion Questions and Answers

1. Carefully read the first paragraph of “A Tale of Music” and discuss how the narrator is constructed for us. Then, interpret why you think the narrator is characterized this way. *Students should be able to discuss and fully list: the first person narrator, the narrator’s immediate tone of humility and self-debasement; the first person narrator speaks in present tense; the narrator’s deliberately asserted purpose of discussing the brother who works in a quarry and not the brother who’s a trumpeter; the narrator’s italicized thoughts that she tells readers are the same as our thoughts; and the narrator’s structure of a flashback.*

*Secondly, then students will move into their interpretations on why they think the narrator is fashioned in this way. Discussion should center on whether first person narrators are more trustworthy (Malcolm Gladwell seems to think not), how the tone of humility sets the narrator up as one who must be schooled in the more worthy “work” (quarry work vs. music work) and how this tone is further substantiated by her italicized thoughts that show us her previously mistaken assumptions—that are much like our own, and finally, that if we follow this maturing narrator, we too will learn where our mistaken perspectives came from and see why the focus should be on the brother who works in the quarry.*

*Certainly though, at the AP level, students should be able to raise the discussion that as soon as a narrator tells us what not to focus on, we will inevitably focus on this older, musically-inclined brother instead, and so perhaps that is the author’s inadvertent purpose—that we question absolute devotion to a cause. And it will be in that ambiguous realm that we will delve.*

2. Make a T-chart comparing the plot events of the two brothers. Have the older brother on the left and the younger brother on the right. What does the order of events for both tell us about how we are to react to them, and how they are characterized? Seeing the two side-by-side, why are they characterized this way?

*Students should be able to list for the older brother:*

*\*became the first trumpeter in the Rakutan Junior High School (106)*

*\*practiced trumpet on a rock, near a waterfall (106)*

*\*works at an iron works (106)*

*\*catches younger brother playing his trumpet (107)*

*\*admits that because he’s Korean, he can’t get a music gig, and so he’s contemplated suicide (107)*

*\*hurt hand at iron works (107)*

*\*does not celebrate younger brother’s 1<sup>st</sup> place prize*

*\*back in “fatherland”, Korea, gets hand surgery (for free) and goes to music college (118)*

*\*became a trumpeter with a first-rate theater group (118)*

*\*performing his trumpet overseas (120)*

*Students should be able to list for the younger brother:*

*\*he goes without lunch at his primary school (105)*

*\*developed an interest in trumpet; held music stand for older brother (106)*

*\*played older brother’s trumpet in secret, while elder was at work (106)*

*\*secretly plays the trumpet at his school and is caught and punished by headmaster (108)*

*\*requested permission to tryout and then secured a spot on the Middle School Band (110)*

*\*music teacher commends his playing and compares him to Bok—a musical genius—and also, as youngest points out, this “Bok” is his older brother (110-11)*

*\*1961—concert band competition—younger brother wins first prize (112)*

*\*find out name: Bok Seigen (Pak Song-won)*

*\*plays “O Sole Mio” for competition and while playing, hopes that “there would be the ‘sun’ that would brightly shine” on his family (115)*

*\*meets the great wrestler, Rikidozan, and reacts poorly (“just another Japanese”) and then enthusiasm wanes for trumpet (116)*

*\*moves back to Korea with his family (117)*

*\*1969—graduates from high school and recommended for music college (118)*

*\*joins the People’s Army, with the rest of his class, as a result of the Pueblo event (119)*

*\*writes a letter stating that he’s played his trumpet for Kim Il Sung’s 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and has finally seen “the great sun” (120)*

*\*says he’ll be joining the stone production sector, and gives parents his assignment letter, which he volunteered for (121)*

*\*joins a mining college and became an engineer (121)*

*\*his son joins the People’s Army, and he does not show up at the train station because he’s working at the mine (122)*

*\*wins an award for a great feat in “building monuments” for Kim Jong Il (123)*

*\*journal revealed where he stated that music cannot express the deep love that one has for his country (124)*

*\*supposedly sees the place in the mountainside that Kim Il Sung had visited (125)*

*\*supposedly see the place where Kim Jong Il built a monument for Samjiyon—leader who fought against Japanese (126)*

*\*hears “music” in the stones to be made into monuments to last through all of history (127)*

*\*had missed son’s departure because he’d returned to the mine to continue work for the great leader, just as the example shown by the poor folks on the road who had bowed to his truck (129)*

*Most specifically, when comparing this list, students should be able to see that while the eldest brother attains all of the comforts and benefits from Korea, the younger brother*

*suffers and struggles for the country's overall good. The eldest brother then is left by the sister narrator, "overseas", as if he's not truly one with the country, while the younger brother is literally in the heart of the country—inside the mine—intimately carving its history. Thus, we are to admire his devotion. Students will undoubtedly call to the discussion though, the disappointment that the younger brother causes to his wife, child, and sister, and ask whether these sacrifices are worth it. The conversation should then turn to whether there is a "right" answer to that question and how perspective is so key here. They will probably also suggest that perhaps the author is attempting to undermine this unconditional nationalism and encourage others not to turn into stones—again, which will have to be discussed in terms of context and shared articles considering whether any underground literature is being published in North Korea.*

3. How do the following allusions work in the story? What tone(s) do they set for the story?
  - The Kodama, a bullet train that passes by the Katsuragawa riverside (111)
  - Italian folk song "O Sole Mio" (115)
  - the American imperialists' spy ship, the Pueblo (118)
  - EC-121, American military reconnaissance plane (119)
  - The 'arduous march' in the mid-1990s (122)
  - Heinrich Heine's poem "Declaration" (127)

*Students will use their iPads to research these allusions, so resources will vary:*

*The Kodama—its debut in 1958 and the repercussions for an industrializing nation; whether its Japanese meaning (echo) has any symbolic significance; why the Korean family never travels on this train, yet it passes them daily.*

*"O Sole Mio"—once students find out that the translation is specifically "my sunshine" and that the majority of the song centers around the sun, hopefully they draw textual connections between the younger son's feeling while playing the trumpet that "the 'sun' would brightly shine on our poor family..." and later the realization by the younger son that when playing his trumpet at Kim Il Sung's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, only then did he understand who/what the true "sun" is (Korean reader: 115, 120).*

*The Pueblo—students should be able to discuss the historical event of the U.S. Naval vessel that was engaged in routine surveillance and was captured by North Korean patrol boats. They should be able to discuss the tone of the passage (condemnatory) and how different perspectives can clash. Lastly, they should talk about the fate of this physical ship and where it rests now (only U.S. vessel held by a foreign country, and supposedly North Korea put it on display in a museum).*

*EC-121—similarly students should discuss the historical event, how it was perceived by both sides, and what transpired (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/25/north-korea-us-spy-ship-museum>).*

*The "arduous march"—students should understand the magnitude of famine and death that overtook North Korea from 1994-1998. Then, putting this back into context, students should be able to discuss why the author puts the brother in his mine working and*

*seemingly untouched, and why the author so casually mentions this devastating loss of life (approximately 3.5 million died from starvation).*

*Heinrich Heine's poem "Declaration"—students should read the poem in its entirety and then be able to discuss how and why this classic love poem would be a fitting way for the younger son to express his "great, passionate love" for the Great Leader (124).*

*Overall then, the discussion will center on how allusions work to create tone and mood—in this case enhancing the staunch nationalism and belittling those who attempt to intervene.*

4. Why do you think the author has the first person narrator speak less, and has the youngest brother speak more—through his "'Creative Notes'" (124-127) at the end of the story?

*Students should begin here to consider elements of propaganda as a literary genre.*

*Students should access [literarydevices.net/propaganda/](http://literarydevices.net/propaganda/) to discuss definitions, but more importantly, examples. The second example noted, is another North Korean text: The Orphan Master's Son. Armed with their definitions, we can then return to the story and discuss how propaganda functions here, whether the story still holds literary value even if purely propaganda, and whether anyone reads it as other than propaganda.*

*To return specifically to this question then, students should discuss how the youngest brother's recorded thoughts are poetic and profound, and thus deserve to end the story. The sister has come to learn this "truth", while the brother profoundly feels it and devotes his life to it. So certainly if music cannot serve as an effective outlet for his passions, words shared with others can't either. Only when composing his "notes" (gotta love the pun!) about his real and valid work for the State, can he express himself.*

5. When comparing the youngest brother's description of the setting of North Korea while on his march (125), to the description of Japan on page 104, the first paragraph in Part I, what differences in setting do you note and why are these important to our understanding of propaganda?

*Students should specifically discuss adjectives here and how desolate, dirty, and cramped Japan is compared to the spaciousness, cleanliness, and lushness of North Korea—even amidst their "arduous march". Students can discuss the believability of these settings or whether this is purely for promoting a political cause and then more fully discuss how contrasts of this nature are often overlooked and yet have such a powerful influence on the images we create in our head as we read.*

6. Yu Young-Nan translated this particular short story into English. In her essay, "Strategies of a Non-Native Translator", she argues that "...readers become gradually accustomed to foreign cultures by reading translated works. Therefore one of the translator's roles is to familiarize the unfamiliar through the act of translation." What common problems do you imagine translators face? And secondly, when dealing with a propaganda piece, what complications arise in Young-Nan's assertion that we become accustomed to foreign cultures by reading translated works?

*Students will be reading Yu Young-Nan's essay for homework, but this pre-reading question is designed for them to set goals for their reading. Students should be able to arrive at a discussion about how idioms and more local color language is most problematic for translators—especially in an age like now when language so quickly changes. Upon reading the essay, they will discover these other problem areas: dialogue; redundancies; pronouns in English vs. titles implicit in Korean—thus making character relationships unclear; and linear paragraphs in English vs. intentional contradictions in Korean paragraphs.*

*Finally, students will need to do some critical thinking to ascertain that with propaganda writing, if a reader feels she is “familiarizing” herself with North Korean culture, she must also remind herself that the familiarity is only with the very cleansed literature approved by a strict regime and all for the purpose of promoting their leader and their culture. So readers should be careful not to feel that their familiarity is definitively true because they are not permitted to see an unfiltered view*

*([https://www.gwu.edu/~eall/archive/special/Yu\\_Young-nan1.htm](https://www.gwu.edu/~eall/archive/special/Yu_Young-nan1.htm)).*

## **Activities:**

### **Day One (50 minute class period):**

- Students will be handed a blank sheet of lined paper as they enter. On the board, hidden by the shade tool (Promethean Board), will be the opening paragraph from Kwi-mi Kang's short story “A Tale of Music”. Students will be creating a Question Paper based on their timed, close reading of this paragraph.
- Students will be given 7 minutes to read and reread the paragraph as often as they like; they will capture the questions arising in their minds as they're reading; they will record these questions in any format and order they like. The purpose of the Question Paper is for students to “wander themselves into understanding” (College Board).
- Students' Question Papers will be collected as 7 minutes expire. I will then show students the title and author and share very brief historical information regarding the publication place and date. Students will be asked what they know about North Korea at this particular time in history, and then based on gaps of understanding, we will move into the historical readings.
- Students will take out their iPads and pull up the displayed Library of Congress site (displayed on board). I will briefly discuss the Table of Contents with them and offer them insight about segments they might also like to read about on Korean history, and then students will form 7 groups and will be assigned sections of corresponding Korean history that complement the short story [http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/pdf/CS\\_North-Korea.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf) 31.
- Sections of reading assigned to students will be as follows, from the Library of Congress site and one related article:
  - Pages 29-32 on cultural genocide

- Pages 32-34 on the March 1, 1919 uprising
- Pages 35-37 on forced labor
- Pages 37-39 on Korea's division
- Pages 43-43 on DPRK
- Pages 50-54 Kim Il Sung and "hermit kingdom"
- Nowatka, Edward. "Frogs in a Well: Literary Life in North Korea".  
*Publishing Perspectives*. 2.9.10.

<http://publishingperspectives.com/2010/02/frogs-in-a-well-literary-life-in-north-korea/>

- Students will be given approximately 10 minutes to read their segments. They will then follow the protocol for "The Final Word" (as outlined in appendices) staying strictly within the timed format. The total for their discussion time will be 5 minutes (or less, depending on the number in the group).
- Each group will then present key notes to the other groups; the presenter for each group will be allotted 2 minutes to share.
- While the students were doing their reading, I will have collated their central questions on their Question Papers into an organized document with categories. For example, if five students asked questions about why the narrator of "A Tale of Music" so assertively points out that she will not be talking about her elder brother, but instead the younger brother, I will group these questions together and comment on the apparent desire on the narrator's part to compare and contrast the two brothers—thus asking us as readers to do the same tonight as we read the story. Other students may ask whether we will find out the narrator's name. Again, I will group these questions, ask *why* students are interested to know and *how* the use of a proper name changes our relationship to our narrator, and then ask that they make note of this question as another reading goal. (Note: students really appreciate the Question Paper because it allows them to see that their questions aren't "stupid", and that they share similar ideas with classmates. This is a huge way to boost confidence and participation!)
- I will save the collated categories from their Question Papers on our class site, so that students can access it that evening during their reading, if so desired.
- Homework: Close reading of the short story "A Tale of Music" (this always includes marginal notes and preparation with comments for the following day's Socratic discussion). Students will also be asked to note any allusions made in the story, research those that they're unfamiliar with, and have these notes available for tomorrow's discussion.

## Day 2 (50 minute class period):

- Students will take out their short story “A Tale of Music” along with all close reading notes and will pull up the collated Question Papers on their iPads.
- While doing so, they will watch the YouTube clip “North Korea’s propaganda machine” (3:27) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3F6ScecrM0>). They will add to their notes, thoughts and ideas about what propaganda looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Once settled in their “comfort zone”, they will then watch the YouTube clip “North Korean documentary—Western Propaganda—American propaganda documentary” (listen up until 3:40, in order to see introductory remarks and hear thesis asserted) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEGMJJE6I\\_Q4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEGMJJE6I_Q4)). They will again be asked to take notes about what propaganda looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Finally, students will be shown the interview clip with New Zealander, Slavko Martinov, the real director of the propaganda film, who explains why he conducted this social experiment (and obviously how the documentary is *not* from North Korea...). He discusses why he made the film, why he created the fictional translator “Sabine” who was supposedly “translating as fast as [she] could” to publish portions of the documentary online, and even asks himself the same question we should be asking: “how is this film viewed?”, especially in North Korea. (<http://www.indiewire.com/article/so-what-happens-when-you-make-a-fake-north-korean-propaganda-film>).
- Student-led discussion will center on similarities and differences between the American perspective and the North Korean perspective, as told by an outsider (so the dual consideration here: is this what North Koreans think of Americans and why is this New Zealander creating propaganda that attempts to slander Americans *from* North Koreans?) leading ultimately to the question: which perspective is right? True? Realistic? And then leading us into the discussion of the short story...(approximately 6-8 minutes). **Note:** the focal question should continue to return to how and why we figure out what is right and true, and how we continually question our own assumptions (i.e.—how many assumed that the documentary was from North Korea and would never have taken the time to verify the filmmaker?).
- I will open our Socratic seminar with the question about the narrator and what we know about her; as clarity is gained, I will then move to discussion question #4 above (why does the narrator speak less at the end?); and then, with an understanding of who is speaking, in what tone, and from what point of view, we can then determine whether we hear either voice (the sister-narrator, or the younger brother through his journal) as propagandist. Students will be asked to cite specific textual evidence in each of their discussion points. (25-30 minutes)
  - Special attention should be paid to the following textual passages, and—if not noted by students—will be asserted by teacher:
    - p. 105-06: “It was truly surprising that musical talent...best trumpet player in this band” with attention to irony of “not” focusing on the elder brother and tone of pride in musical talent.

- p. 106: “My second brother, who was in the sixth grade... acting as a music stand” with attention to imagery and symbolism of brother “on a rock” and acting as a physical form of music.
- p. 113: “Only my eldest brother was quiet...who would end up become just like him” with attention to the brother’s mood of melancholy and foreshadowing that the younger brother would be a failure just like him—considering then, does the narrator end up seeing him as a failure, even though by the State’s standards, he succeeds? Or does she see him as a success because he does not end up pursuing music?
- p. 121: “My brother got married, and I was married soon after...as if he himself had turned into stone” with attention to this motif and the irony of why the younger brother’s automaton-seeming state is noted if, in fact, it is this very state that will come to be revered. Ironic? Or meant for distinct contrast/foil effect?
- p. 128: “I would like to end my story...hoping to catch a ride” with attention to the narrator’s tone and diction. Why end with this rationale? And why use the word “couldn’t”? Or, is this a translator’s choice? What connotation do we associate with “couldn’t”—positive or negative?
- Students will then be asked to pull up the Literary Devices.net site on “Propaganda”. (<http://literarydevices.net/propaganda/>). They will do Think-Pair-Share with a partner to read, discuss, and add to their notes the pertinent ideas on propaganda literature.
  - As a whole group then, I will more overtly point out the examples listed on the site. *Animal Farm* is a book they read as freshmen in Honors English 9, and *The Orphan Master’s Son* is a book I have that I will show and then pass around as a recommended Extra Credit novel.
- Lastly, students will complete an Exit Ticket which asks them: what complications do you imagine might arise for a translator translating a propaganda piece? List as many ideas that you can brainstorm in our remaining 2 minutes.
- Homework: Students will read Yu Young-Nan’s essay, “Strategies of a Non-Native Translator”. They should take close reading notes and come prepared for discussion tomorrow (and of course we’ll be weaving back in the trustworthiness of translators). Note: Any student interested in the musical connections in the story, please see me after class for possible extra credit or a family field trip
  - Students will be given a sheet outlining Ringing Rocks (see attached Extra Credit). This will be something they can decide to pursue at their leisure at any time during the year.

### **Day 3 (50 minute class period):**

- Students will arrive to class and on their way in the door, will receive the directions for our Chalk Talk. When the bell rings, I will begin the activity by writing the following phrase on the board: “After reading Young-Nan’s essay, I...”
- After students have had ample time to respond to the phrase and to each other, students may then take a picture of our work and save it with their other class work. They can

then also keep this “document” open for our discussion on Young-Nan’s essay. I will open with the question: after our discussion of Kwi-mi’s narrator and whether she was a trustworthy narrator or not, have we effectively considered whether our translator is trustworthy or not (this will be especially pertinent for the next novel we’ll read in the course curriculum: *The Stranger*. The Matthew Ward translation is much more trustworthy than the Stuart Gilbert translation, and students will need to be able to distinguish why.). We will spend approximately 10 minutes on this activity.

- Then, I will model for students how a path of intrigue and research can occur. I will set forth the questions that build one upon the other as one truly starts to study literature, and students will complete the research work that I’ve already done. These steps of questioning and researching will then become the basis for the post-AP Exam independent research project. I will reveal each question under the Shade Tool (Promethean board) one at a time, and students will independently research and take notes on their findings. Students will have approximately 3-5 minutes per question (25-30 minutes total).
  - Is our translator trustworthy? What do I know about her?
  - For that matter, what do I really know about my author?
  - Well, if I can’t find out anything about my author, what do I know about her publication spaces?
    - Upon finding out that Kang Kwi-mi published in the *Choson Munhak*, as noted for them in the introductory material by the translator, they will pursue information about this journal and about the Writer’s Alliance.
  - So if Kwi-mi published in the *Choson Munhak*, where was Young-Nan’s translated copy published?
    - Upon finding out the name of the book, *Literature from the Axis of Evil: Writing from Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and other Enemy Nations (Words Without Borders Anthology)*, students will pursue information about this book and this organization. They should also identify the origin of the phrase “Axis of Evil”, and therefore note for me that the book’s title is facetious.
  - If the two titles of the labels on the book seem to clash, why? (i.e.—a place without borders seems to conflict with a label of “Axis of Evil”). My hope is that students reach this same critical thinking question that I did, and then perhaps a few might recall from the North Korean documentary from yesterday, the use of this phrase by President Bush as another form of propaganda in our country.
  - At this time, I will share my copy of *Literature from the Axis of Evil: Writing from Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and other Enemy Nations (Words Without Borders Anthology)*. Students can then also see the other literary works in the anthology, too.

Connections to other literary works:

Finally, if a single story has the power to generate this many questions and allows us to gain broader, more educated perspectives, how can we continue to craft our own

educations. At this time, we will move into one of our quarterly Book Talks (see appendix). During this time, I merely show and tell some other interesting books that students might be interested to add to their reading lists.

- Perhaps some are interested in reading more from those voices that politicians have labeled “evil”, and considering whether one harbors any similar biases. Let me know if you’d like to *borrow Literature from the Axis of Evil*.
- Perhaps some might want to read other works translated by Yu Young-Nan.
- Perhaps some might want to read *The Orphan Master’s Son*, to further interpret propaganda literature. An interesting Extra Credit essay might discuss the literary devices used in this novel as compared to Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.
- Finally, some might be interested in another anonymous author writing about North Korea. *The Washington Post* notes that this novel gives “thriller provides [a] rare glimpse into the closed nation” ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/26/AR2006122600798\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/26/AR2006122600798_pf.html)). Students will have a chance to see this article pulled up on the board. In *Time* magazine, the writers are surprise[d] to realize that Kim’s name isn’t mentioned at all in the 280 pages of James Church’s impressive North Korean thriller” (<http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1576557,00.html>). Students will again see the article pulled up on the screen. And *The Los Angeles Times* notes that the main character of the thriller “struggles to keep his humanity in an authoritarian and increasingly corrupt society” (<http://articles.latimes.com/2009/may/02/world/fg-korea-detective2>). After seeing the three introductory articles, I will show the novel to students: *A Corpse in the Koryo*. Perhaps some might want to read this and consider many of the same research questions we posed above. You might also want to do an Extra Credit essay educating me on why I should read it (they always love teaching me!)
- Students will be reminded that the purpose of our course is for them to find avenues of interest and follow questions where they lead.

## Works Cited

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## Appendix

1. Question Paper
2. The Final Word
3. Book Talks
4. Ringing Rocks—Extra Credit Sheet
5. Chalk Talk

## Question Papers

Question Papers are strictly meant as a place where students write down the questions arising in their heads *during* their reading.

There is no format; spelling, grammar, and punctuation do not matter.

Students should allow themselves to wander into understanding—in other words—they should pause with the initial questions they're raising, and then allow themselves to pose deeper, related questions to their original one.

I also stress to my students that few, if any, of their questions should begin with what/where/when/who, but instead (especially at the AP level) should begin with how and why. Typically, the Question Papers at the beginning should be timed and used with a specifically designated portions of text. Students should also see immediate use of their questions and their validity (whether through the teacher collating the questions into categories, to use as the activating strategy the next day, or by exchanging with a partner and having students set their own goals for reading that night).

Eventually, for AP students, when they need the occasional reading day in class, I will give them a 50 minute period to catch up on some reading (or begin a new novel that I know that may not find accessible unless they sit and struggle through reading and questioning together in class) and submit a Question Paper at the end of the period. Often then, I will use their deepest critical thinking questions to open the next day's discussion.

## The Final Word

Close Textual Analysis: Protocols for Focused Small Group Discussions  
(Cecelia Boyes: Curriculum Ideas, Korea Curriculum, 19)

1. Sit in a circle and determine who will serve as not only a discussion participant but also the facilitator (the person who keeps an eye on the time and reminds everyone to follow the steps of the protocol).
2. Begin with several minutes of quiet time so that every person in the group can highlight a “significant idea” from the text.
3. The first person then reads a small portion of the text, locating it so that all in the group may follow along, and explains in two minutes or less why the quote is important.
4. Then, each person in the group responds to the quote and to the first person’s interpretation. The time allotment is one minute per person.
5. Finally, the person who began has the “final word”. She may acknowledge the ideas of the others, restate her original thought, or explain how her thinking about the original quote has changed. The time allotment is one minute.
6. The process continues until all have had an opportunity to select a quote for discussion.

## Book Talks

1. Purpose: to introduce students to literature outside of our curriculum, that we either just cannot get to, or that might need to be offered as a choice vs. as a suggested reading.
2. I always make sure I have a copy of the books I'm talking about, so I can show these and pass them to students. When doing so, I find I have almost a 100% success rate of students asking me within the week to borrow a book for extra credit.
3. The "talk" part of the discussion centers mainly on me giving the author, time period, genre, and a brief summation, leaving off with a climactic cliffhanger.
4. I also try to note the accessibility of the novel. This way, students who truly want the greatest challenge know what to pursue.
5. I try also to note interesting pairings of novels (for example, I discuss *Wide Sargasso Sea* in conjunction with our reading of *Jane Eyre*.)
6. And finally, and most importantly, I get the books into their hands by passing them all around. When class is over, I put as many as I can on the display book stands around the room.

## Ringling Rocks – Extra Credit Sheet

Ringling rocks are right in our backyard here in Pennsylvania! These rocks, when struck with a hammer or mallet, sound like bells. Ringling rocks are also known as sonorous rocks or lithophonic rocks.

There is a Ringling Rocks Park in Bucks County—only about 45 minutes from us! The land started out as only 7 protected acres, but when turned into a county park, now is 128 acres.

The Stony Garden boulder fields are also located in Bucks County, PA. If you're looking for a more rustic family field trip, these fields are disconnected boulder fields and you can hike to them via hiking trails.

Curiously little has been scientifically published about these ringling rock fields. There have been several university professors who have studied these rocks fields (Lehigh University professor, Dr. Wherry, 1885-1982, Franklin and Marshall professor, Dr. Fackenthal, 1851-1941, and Dr. Faas of Lafayette College, 1965), but perhaps this is your big opportunity!

You can also check out the YouTube clip: "Ringling Rocks Park Pottstown, Pennsylvania" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NBfrLoBpsIQ>) to catch a quick glimpse of what you'll find there.

What other musical instruments are formed from stones?

What cultures use stone instruments and for what purposes?

Where were the first stone instruments used?

Why is the youngest brother's idea of "music in the rocks" not so far-fetched?

## Chalk Talk

Textual Analysis: Technique for Catalyzing Whole Group Discussions  
(Cecelia Boyes: Curriculum Ideas, Korea Curriculum, 21)

1. The teacher explains that this is a totally silent discussion; all comments or questions are made in writing on the board or poster paper.
2. The teacher begins by putting a quote, a character name, a literary technique, a question—anything—in the center of the board or paper.
3. The students write their thoughts, drawing a line from their words to the words that inspired their ideas—either the teacher’s initial inscription or a fellow student’s comment.
4. It is helpful to have several writing instruments in use at once but also to have rules for how many students can be up at the board at one time.
5. The teacher may either watch the discussion unfold or contribute by circling interesting ideas, writing additional questions and comments, or drawing lines to connect related student comments.
6. This activity often works best if it simply ceases; that is, give everyone enough time to read what has been written but then move on to another, perhaps related, activity.

