

Name _____ Date _____

Confucianism

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. b'

The Analects

The Analects is a book compiled by students of Confucius after his death. It is a collection of Confucius's sayings and conversations. The goal of the book was to record his teachings for his followers and to serve as a guide for a more harmonious society.

Read the following excerpts from the Analects.

Notes

2. b'

Notes

Mencius and Xunzi

Mencius and Xunzi were Confucian philosophers during the Warring States Period in China. But they had very different perspectives on Confucianism, especially regarding their understanding of human nature.

Mencius believed that all people are born inherently good and have innate virtues such as benevolence and righteousness. Xunzi argued the opposite point of view: Human nature is bad, and people need to be taught moral virtues. Xunzi's theory on human nature influenced politics and contributed to the development of Legalism, which the Qin Dynasty adopted as their official state philosophy. Legalism emphasized the importance of strict laws to maintain order in society, which strengthened the rulers' authority.

Mencius, however, believed that the people were more important than the state or ruler. He argued that rulers should protect the welfare of the people and that their main responsibility is to create a society in which people can flourish. Mencius thought that if a ruler is unable to fulfill their duties, then they should be removed from their position.

3. b'

Notes

Han Dynasty

The Han Dynasty emerged after the fall of the Qin Dynasty in 202 BCE. During the Qin Dynasty, many Confucian texts and records were either confiscated or burned by Emperor Qin Shi Huang because he feared that they would undermine his authority and power. However, with the start of the Han Empire, Confucianism was revived, and efforts were made to collect any remaining Confucian documents.

The Han Empire adopted Confucianism as the official state ideology and established Confucian schools. Confucian classics that survived the Qin Dynasty were used as main parts of school curricula. Studying Confucianism was necessary in order to take civil service exams, and many government officials were Confucian scholars.

