

## Week Four: Response with Evidence, FANBOYS

**Weekly Focus:** Response with Evidence  
**Weekly Skills:** Textual Evidence, FANBOYS  
**Essential Question:** Why do we tell stories?

**Lesson Summary:** Students will read about the historical character, Wu Zetian. The intention is to give students practice writing an evidence-based response about a controversial figure—answers may vary from student to student, but the emphasis is on the use of supporting evidence in a constructed response. Students will also be introduced to FANBOYS (coordinating conjunctions).

**Materials Needed:** Wu Zetian and Responses with Evidence, FANBOYS, index cards

**Objectives: Students will be able to...**

- Read and understand a non-fiction passage
- Identify contrast and contradictions within a historical character
- Identify specific evidence in a text
- Respond to a prompt with evidence
- Identify Independent clauses
- Use coordinating conjunctions to join independent clauses

**Common Core Standards Addressed:** W.11-12.10, W.11-12.5, W.11-12.4, W.11-12.1, RL.11-12.1, RL.11-12.3, L.11-12.3, L.11-12.6, L.4.1f.

**Notes:**

This is the Responding with Evidence section of the CARE model. Make students aware of this, especially as they are doing their individual writing both for the reading and the writing segments of class. Remind students that they, like other respected writers, cannot simply say something is true. They must also support their opinions with examples from the texts that we are reading.

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### Activities:

#### Warm-Up/Review: Creative Writing

Time: 20 minutes

**Prompt:** What qualities do you think a woman would have needed to have in order to rule a country 1600 years ago?

#### Reading Activity: Tang Poetry Images

Time: 80 minutes

- Briefly explain to students that we will be reading about a powerful woman from the Tang Dynasty, Wu Zetian. They will be expected to construct a written, evidence-based response after reading her story. Preview the writing prompt with students before reading.
- Next, instruct students to read the story silently, looking for instances of "Contrast and Contradiction." In this context, instruct students to pay attention to the way that Wu Zetian's actions in her public and private life are contradictory.
- When students finish reading, answer the first question as a large group. (**Answer:** The two-sided conflict within the real life character of Wu Zetian refers to her drastically different personas in her public life and her personal life. She seems to be full of contradictions between the way she rules the country—i.e. the policies she puts in place—and the way she deals with people on a personal level.)
- Have students work in groups of two or three to complete the chart for question number two. Remind students they need to pull answers directly from the text and **cite the number of the paragraph** in which they found the answer. (Circle around the room to make sure everyone is on the right track).
- After 10-15 minutes, regroup students so they are with a different person. Have them compare their charts and change/add things as necessary. (Circle around the room to make sure everyone is on the right track).
- Then, as a large group, go over the instructions for the written response, and have students work individually to complete it.
- Regroup to share writing and answer the essential question, "Why do we tell (historical) stories?"

**Break: 10 minutes**

#### Grammar Activity: FANBOYS

Time: 60 minutes

**Review:** Review what makes a complete sentence (subject, verb, complete idea).

**Introduction:** Explain to students that if there are more than one of these word groupings (Independent Clauses), students will need to use punctuation to combine them. One way to do this is by using a coordinating conjunction. Students can remember these conjunctions with FANBOYS (link for teacher reference only). Hand-out FANBOYS worksheet and go over with class.

**Practice:** In groups, have students come up with examples to put in their FANBOYS worksheet. Do the first few together.

Next, hand out index cards with words on them to each group. The words should make a compound sentence that can be joined using a FANBOYS. Don't forget a comma card. Students should

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organize the words in the correct order. Switch card groupings, giving them to a new group. After small groups complete this activity, you can do this on a larger scale with the class. Give several students an index card or sheet of paper and have them physically arrange themselves in the correct order in front of the class. Classmates can call out suggestions.

**Sandboxing:** If time, have students choose two of their own sentences from today's writing and combine them using a FANBOY and correct punctuation.

**Wrap-Up:** Whip Discussion

**Time:** 10 min.

Have students form a circle. Go around and have each person answer this question: "What is one thing that you will take away from today?" Each student should share something, even if it is a one word answer.

**Extra Work/Homework:**

**Time:**

Have Advanced Students research the Tang Dynasty and report back to class.

Differentiated Instruction/ELL Accommodation Suggestions	Activity
If Beginning students are struggling to complete the chart using "citations" from the text, pair them with a more advanced student.	Reading
For Advanced students, have them come up with their own compound sentences using each of the FANBOYS.	Grammar

**Online Resources:**

- 1) [Independent and Dependent Clauses, Purdue Owl](#)

**Suggested Teacher Readings:** TBA

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**Directions:** After reading the story of Wu Zetian below, respond to the questions following the passage. **As you read, keep the reading Signpost of “Contrast and Contradictions” in mind.**

### Wu Zetian

Taken from chinaculture.org

[http://www1.chinaculture.org/gb/en\\_aboutchina/2003-09/24/content\\_22879.htm](http://www1.chinaculture.org/gb/en_aboutchina/2003-09/24/content_22879.htm)

Empress Wu Zetian (624-705) of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) was the only female monarch of China, and ruled the empire for over half a century...

Wu Zetian was born in 624. Her parents were rich and of noble families. As a child she was taught to write, read the Chinese classics and to play music.

At the age of fourteen, this accomplished child became a concubine to Emperor Taizong. She was given the title Cairen (a fifth grade concubine of the Tang Dynasty). Her perspicacity set her apart from others in the palace and her knowledge of literature and history and talent quickly found favor with the emperor. He bestowed Wu Zetian the title Meiniang which means 'charming lady' and she was assigned to work in the imperial study. Here she was introduced to official documents and quickly became acquainted with affairs of state.

In 649, when she was twenty-six years old, the emperor died. He was succeeded by his son Gaozong and following the established court procedures, the old emperor's concubines were sent to a nunnery to live out their days. Emperor Gaozong was fascinated by Wu's talent and beauty and frequently visited her in the nunnery. After a period of some two to three years, she was summoned to the palace and given the title Zhaoyi, the second grade concubine of the new emperor.

Wu gradually earned Gaozong's trust and favor. After giving birth to two sons, she began to compete with Empress Wang and the senior concubine Xiaoshu for the favor of the emperor. To achieve her goals, Wu Zetian horrifically killed off other favorite concubines of the emperor, and to get rid of the empress, she murdered her own infant daughter and blamed it on Empress Wang. Of all of these crimes, the emperor knew nothing...

In 655, Gaozong promoted Wu to the position of Empress in place of the now disgraced Wang. Before long both the former empress and the concubine, Xiaoshu, were put to death due to Wu Zetian's scheme and Wu's position was finally secured. Then Wu Zetian began her political career in earnest for her goal was to become the first female-emperor of China.

Her resourcefulness and discernment meant that she was highly esteemed by her husband, the emperor. Wu recommended and had accepted new ideas regarding agriculture, tax reduction, social reforms and effective labor saving practices. Within five years of her marriage, Wu took an active part in state affairs and fostered her henchmen with zeal.

The emperor suffered a crippling stroke in 660 and Empress Wu Zetian took over the administration of the court. Showing no mercy toward anyone who failed to conform to her

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wishes, she would have them thrown into prison or executed. Her cruelty extended to members of her family as well as those high ranking officials who had contributed much to the founding of the dynasty.

Emperor Gaozong was disgusted by these actions but by now had become too feeble to make efforts to curb Wu Zetian. She would appear in court alongside the emperor whenever he held an audience. The pair became known as the Holy Sovereigns, and the emperor was merely a figurehead and ruled in name only.

Gaozong died in 683 and Wu's third son, Li Xian (656-710) ascended to the throne and was named Emperor Zhongzong. In the February of the following year, Wu deposed Zhongzong as he was proving difficult to control and replaced him with his younger brother, her fourth son, Li Dan (661-716). This latest emperor was known as Ruizong. All along, Wu was the puppet master and ruled the empire through her son, who had no option but to do what she told him. Finally, in 690 Wu Zetian usurped the throne and declared the empire was henceforth ruled by the Zhou Dynasty from her capital city Luoyang.

...She appointed sadistic and cruel officials to seek out and eliminate any opposition to her regime. Not only those who opposed Wu were severely dealt with, but also many other innocent people were cruelly put to death.

As Wu grew older, so her hold on state affairs began to lessen. She also realized that as a woman, she could only be respected after her death as a member of the Li family. She therefore allowed herself to be persuaded in 698 to reinstate Li Xian as Crown Prince. In the year 705 there was a palace coup and Wu was forced to resign. Her son Emperor Zhongzong thus restored the Tang Dynasty to power.

Aged 82, Wu Zetian died in the December 705. She was buried alongside Emperor Gaozong in the Qianling Tomb, located west of the present day Xi'an City...

### **Achievements**

...Wu Zetian was eager to draw into her government all manner of talented people. She even encouraged people to volunteer their services should they consider themselves competent. The imperial examination system was further revised in order that no man of ability should be excluded due to his lowly birth. She also initiated the practice of personally interviewing candidates. In this way, many political talents were found and employed in the government. Such people included the famous prime minister, Di Renjie, Zhang Jianzhi, etc.

Wu Zetian attached great importance to the development of agriculture. She ordered the construction of irrigation schemes, and commissioned the compilation of farming textbooks. Local officials were evaluated by the task of cultivating land. As an incentive for increased production, taxes were reduced and corvee upon the peasant population was eased. By allowing peasant farmers to retain more of their produce, they were able to improve their lot and in general the population benefited from quite considerable prosperity...



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3. You now have specific textual references from the story of Wu Zetian. Refer to these pieces of evidence as you write a two- to three-paragraph response to the following question:

**How do you think Wu Zetian should be remembered in children's history books?  
Explain your answer using evidence from Wu Zetian's story.**

## Group Work Roles

### LEADER

- Makes sure that every voice is heard
- Focuses work around the learning task; guide group from exercise to exercise

**Sound bites: Let's hear from \_\_\_\_ next." "That's interesting, but let's get back to our task."**

### RECORDER

- Compiles group members' ideas:
  - Make a star on the sections/numbers we need to go over
  - Write specific questions

**Sound bites: "I think I heard you say \_\_\_\_\_; is that right?" "How would you like me to write this?"**

### TIME KEEPER

- Encourages the group to stay on task
- Announces when time is halfway through and when time is nearly up

**Sound bite: "We only have five minutes left. Let's see if we can wrap up by then."**

### PRESENTER

- Presents the group's finished work to the class

**Sound bite: "Which questions do we need to go over in this section?" "What else do we need to ask?"**

Created by Jen Ouellette for the Minnesota Literacy Council