



REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon

# CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY

Assessment and Activity Options

## ABOUT THESE ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

The five activities provided in the following pages are intended for us with the *China's One-child Policy* background reading and related materials available on the Asia Pacific Curriculum website (<http://www.asiapacificcurriculum.ca/learning-module/chinas-one-child-policy>). They can be used to build and assess the curricular competencies outlined in the new social studies curriculum for British Columbia (BC) high schools. These competencies are (<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/10-12#ss>):

1. Use Social Studies inquiry processes and skills to ask questions; gather, interpret, and analyze ideas; and communicate findings and decisions.
2. Assess the significance of people, locations, events, or developments, and compare varying perspectives on their significance at particular times and places, and from group to group (significance).
3. Assess the credibility of and justification for evidence after investigating the reliability of sources and data, the adequacy of evidence, and the bias of accounts and claims (evidence).
4. Compare and contrast continuities and changes for different groups, at different times and places (continuity and change).
5. Assess how prevailing conditions and the actions of individuals or groups influence events, places, decisions, or developments (cause and consequence).
6. Explain and infer different perspectives on past and present people, places, issues, or events by considering prevailing norms, values, worldviews, and beliefs (perspectives).
7. Recognize implicit and explicit ethical judgments in a variety of sources (ethical judgment).
8. Make reasoned ethical judgments about actions and assess varying responses to events in the past or present (ethical judgment).

These activities and assessment options were designed by **Ms. Christine Paget**, a high school social studies teacher at West Vancouver Secondary (BC). **Mr. Graeme Stacey**, a social studies teacher at Kelowna Secondary School, provided valuable feedback. These materials are most suitable for use in high school courses such as Human Geography, Asian Studies, 20<sup>th</sup> Century World History, and Social Justice.

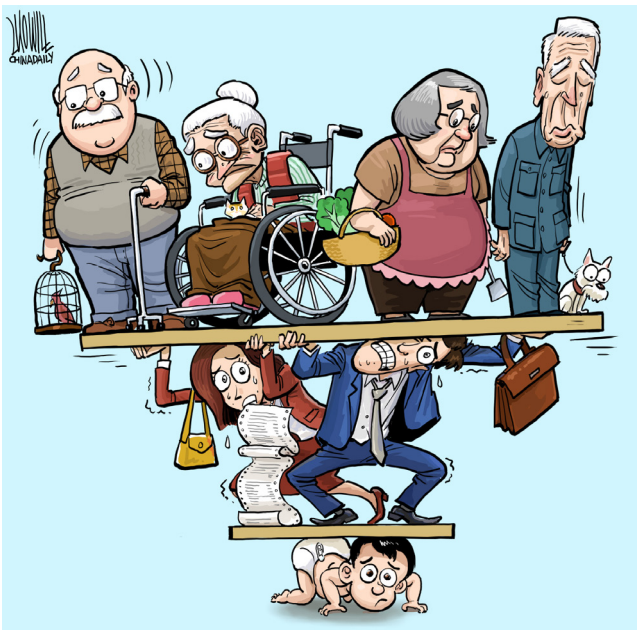
Questions and feedback may be directed to the Asia Pacific Curriculum project, an initiative of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, at [curriculum@asiapacific.ca](mailto:curriculum@asiapacific.ca).

## ACTIVITY 1: QUIZ

Five parts, total 18 marks. Answer key on page 15.

### PART 1: CARTOON ANALYSIS

1. What is happening in the cartoon illustration below? (1 mark)
2. To which consequences of the One-child Policy is the cartoon referring? (1 mark)
3. What is the author of the cartoon trying to illustrate? (2 marks)



Copyright © Luo Jie, 2013  
(Cagle Cartoons)

## ACTIVITY 1, PART 2: GRAPH ANALYSIS

Was the One-child Policy really necessary? Use evidence from the graph below and explain. (3 marks)

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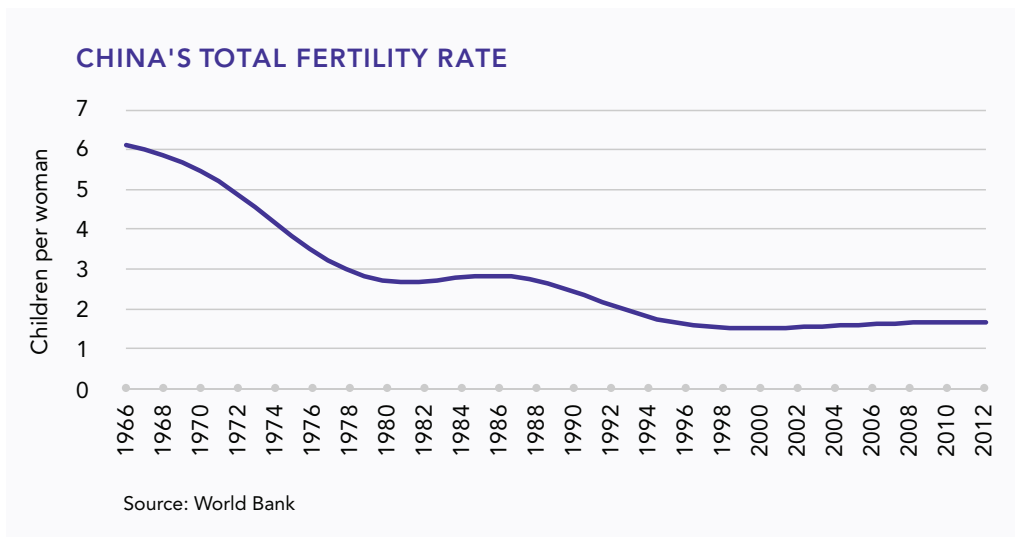
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ACTIVITY 1, PART 3: NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

List and describe three negative consequences of the One-child Policy. (3 marks)

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY 1, PART 4: POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES

China's One-child Policy may have had a positive impact on women's rights in China. Explain. (2 marks—one for each correct point that is explained well.)

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## ACTIVITY 1, PART 5: PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Below you will find three quotes, all expressing support for the argument that the One-child Policy was necessary for China.

1. Choose two of the quotes below, and on the next page explain why the perspective of that person or organization offers insight into the necessity of the One-child Policy. (2 marks—one for each quote analyzed well.)
2. Explain the limitations of your chosen quotes in explaining why the One-child policy was necessary. (2 marks—one for each quote analyzed well.)
3. Explain why a person in China may disagree with the people in the quotes that the One-child Policy was necessary. (2 marks—one for each well-analyzed perspective.)

### Quote 1

“So, we don’t have a right to have so many children. We can live happy, fulfilled lives with just one child, and one child per couple will keep the human race going until we get to that point when we do reach sustainable population and can go back to allowing ourselves to reproduce at replacement value—two children per two parents.”

Sarah Conly, “Here’s Why China’s One-child Policy Was a Good Thing,” *Boston Globe*, 31 October 2015

### Quote 2

“If we do not implement planned population control and let the population increase uncontrollably, rapid population growth is bound to put a heavy burden on the state and the people, cripple the national economy, adversely affect accumulation and State construction, the people’s living standard and their health and slow down progress of the four modernisations.”

Editorial, *People’s Daily* (China), 8 July 1978

### Quote 3

“For some time in the future, China’s basic national condition of a large population will not fundamentally change. It will continue to put pressure on economic and social development. Tensions between the size of the population and resources and environment will not fundamentally change.”

“Xi Says Family Planning to Remain a Long-Term Policy,” *Global Times* (China), 19 May 2016

ACTIVITY 1, PART 5: PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Your answers for your first quote chosen:

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ACTIVITY 1, PART 5: PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Your answers for the second quote chosen:

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## ACTIVITY 2: DESIGN A PROPAGANDA POSTER

**Option 1:** Create a propaganda poster for the One-child Policy

OR

**Option 2:** Create a propaganda poster for China's new two-child policy

Your posters should:

- Refer to one of the perceived benefits of the One-child Policy, according to China's government
- Refer to one of the recognized and discussed reasons for the decline in the Total Fertility Rate (i.e. status of women, women's education, access to medical care, rural-to-urban migration)
- Include a short written explanation of the cartoon, specifically whether the propaganda is aimed at encouraging couples to embrace single-child families (as with the One-child Policy) or encouraging couples to have a second child (as with the new two-child policy)
- Describe the intended audience for your poster
- Give the poster a title

For a description of propaganda and what it is used for, see the background reading, page 4.

### ACTIVITY 3: VIDEO ANALYSIS

"CHINA: UNNATURAL SELECTION," AL JAZEERA ENGLISH (TIME: 25:09)

Available at <http://www.asiapacificcurriculum.ca/learning-module/chinas-one-child-policy> (Multimedia section), or <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/101east/2012/01/20121575219300198.html>.

Answer key on page 18.

Before you watch the video, take some time to look over the questions below so you know what to listen for and where to write your answers.

#### PART 1: LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

There are many consequences of the One-child Policy. To the best of your ability, fill in your answers about the consequences mentioned in the documentary. Share your answers with a partner to fill in any gaps you missed.

#### Consequences for China as a whole

##### *Social*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

##### *Economic*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Consequences for individual people in China

##### *Social*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

*Economic*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Under the One-child Policy, under what circumstances could a person in China have more than one child?**

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**What are the specific consequences for men in China?**

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PART 2: APPLY

**Some of the people interviewed in the film claim that the state had no right to determine the number of children that a person or family in China can have. Argue both sides.**

Reasons why the state SHOULD determine the number of children a citizen can have.

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Reasons why the state should NOT determine the number of children a citizen can have.

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## ACTIVITY 4: CARTOON ANALYSIS

Select a cartoon by clicking on one of the links below. Be prepared to answer the following questions:

1. What is happening in the cartoon?
2. What aspect of the One-child Policy is the cartoon addressing?
3. What is the perspective of the cartoon's illustrator?
4. Who would share these beliefs and who would not share these beliefs (and why/why not)?

Select a cartoon by checking the following links:

- <http://news.kuwaittimes.net/website/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/One-Child-Policy.jpg>
- [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/6/64/Burdened\\_Children\\_effect\\_of\\_One-Child\\_Policy.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/6/64/Burdened_Children_effect_of_One-Child_Policy.png)
- <https://cdn1.nyt.com/images/2013/11/25/opinion/25heng/25heng-articleLarge.jpg>
- <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/CSxdXNLVAAAHg7O.jpg>
- [http://media.indiatimes.in/media/content/2015/Dec/2\\_1451289510.jpg](http://media.indiatimes.in/media/content/2015/Dec/2_1451289510.jpg)
- <http://www.mandmx.com/comics/2008-12-10%20Raising%20a%20Child%20in%20China.jpg>
- <http://www.worldpress.org/images/20110106-china.jpg>  
(translation of 嫁给我 (Chinese): "Marry me.")
- <https://media.licdn.com/mpr/mpr/AEEAAQAAAAAAAh8AAAAJDRkY2QwZDRiLThk-MTQtNDViYy1hYTkyLTJiOTBmZTlyZTUyNg.jpg>

## ACTIVITY 5: PRIMARY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS AND ARGUMENT BUILDING

Use a combination of primary source material to compose a paragraph-length argument around the guiding questions below. Your paragraph should include references to the sources you use. The sources should be charts and graphs that show the following:

- Past economic growth or forecasts for future economic growth
- Population growth or decline
- Pollution levels
- Availability of food and fresh water
- Population density

Good sources of data and graphs can be found at World Statistics (<http://world-statistics.org/>) or other data-gathering organizations such as the World Bank or United Nations.

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

You should choose a country other than China and analyze trends related to its economy, population, pollution, natural resources, and population density. Then, compare these trends to those of China for the same time period. Based on your comparison, would you say that the One-child Policy benefitted China? You should define what you mean by “benefitted” and support your argument with evidence.

### STEPS:

1. Choose a country (other than China) and find a set of graphs or other figures that show that country’s trends in terms of its economy, population growth/decline, pollution, availability of food and fresh water, and population density. Describe the trends you see for the country you choose.
2. Examine similar data for the case of China and determine whether the trends you see in China could be related to the One-child Policy.
3. Next, compare China’s data with that of the other country and explain, using specific examples, why the One-child Policy may have produced different results in the case of China.
4. Explain why the One-child Policy may have benefitted or not benefitted China, with reference to your data.
5. Define what “benefitted” means for the purpose of this project.

## ANSWER KEY FOR ACTIVITY 1: QUIZ

### PART 1: CARTOON ANALYSIS

1. What is happening in the cartoon illustration below? (1 mark) (Possible answers)
  - This cartoon describes the 4-2-1 problem, with two parents and up to four grandparents relying on one child for support.
  - There is a lot of responsibility on younger generations to care for older generations.
  - The child in the cartoon is responsible for taking care of six people because of the One-child Policy.
  - The child is overwhelmed by the looming responsibility of caring for parents and grandparents.
2. To which consequences of the One-child Policy is the cartoon referring? (1 mark) (Possible answers)
  - 4-2-1 problem consequence
  - Four grandparents being taken care of by two parents, and the two parents being taken care of by one child
3. What is the author of the cartoon trying to illustrate? (2 marks) (Possible answers)
  - It is increasingly difficult for the young to take care of the old, as there is a larger population of elders and a smaller population of young people, and this is negatively affecting all generations. Elders aren't getting care as that is as good as it could be, and young people have too much responsibility and not enough help in caring for the older generations.

### ACTIVITY 1, PART 2: GRAPH ANALYSIS

Was the One-child Policy really necessary? Use evidence from the graph and explain. (3 marks) (Possible answer)

- According to the graph, China already had a decrease in the average number of children per family between 1966 (six children) and 1980 (fewer than three children). This demonstrates that through urbanization, increased family planning, and increasing access to education, China was already moving towards slower population growth. Therefore, the One-child Policy was probably unnecessary.

### ACTIVITY 1, PART 3: NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

List and describe three negative consequences of the One-child Policy. (3 marks) (Possible answers)

- It made China's gender balance uneven. Males are favoured over females, and there are now more men than women. It is harder for men to find wives and start a family because of this gender imbalance.

- It makes it very difficult for “above quota” children who are not registered with a hukou (also known as “black children” or “hidden children”) to access education and health care.
- Chinese people have reported being subjected to forced abortions and forced sterilization by local officials responsible for enforcing the One-child Policy. Many of these people feel that such officials go too far in the level of control over people’s bodies.
- There is too much pressure on young people to succeed at school and careers because they need to support older generations. One of the clearest examples is the 4-2-1 problem.
- It has encouraged the “Little Emperor Syndrome” whereby the only child becomes the centre of the family’s attention and can be spoiled by his parents and grandparents.

#### ACTIVITY 1, PART 4: POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES

China’s One-child Policy may have had a positive impact on women’s rights in China. Explain. (2 marks—one for each correct point that is explained well.) (Possible answers)

- Without the pressures and time constraints of raising many children, women have been able to enter the workforce and become more professionally successful than in past years.
- The pressures of having parents to support has led women to further their education and careers in order to meet the needs of their families.

#### ACTIVITY 1, PART 5: PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Below you will find three quotes, all expressing support for the argument that the One-child Policy was necessary for China.

1. Choose two of the quotes below, and on the next page explain why the perspective of that person or organization offers insight into the necessity of the One-child Policy. (2 marks—one for each quote analyzed well.) (Possible answers)
  - Resources are scarce, and therefore the population must be controlled so that there is less stress on these resources.
  - A large and rapidly growing population will negatively affect China’s economic development (e.g., the Four Modernizations).
  - It will affect the living standards of the people of China to have to support and provide for so many people.
  - Why do people need more than one child? People can be happy with one child, and should wait to have more than one child after the size of the world’s population has stabilized.
  - Having a large population will negatively affect people’s health, such as through pollution.



2. Explain the limitations of your chosen quotes in explaining why the One-child policy was necessary. (2 marks—one for each quote analyzed well.) (Possible answers)
- Quote 2 is from the Government of China, and Quote 3 is from a newspaper that is likely under the influence of the Chinese government. The government's priority is a strong economy, and it believes that to achieve a strong economy, population growth must be strictly controlled. These two quotes are limited by the perspective of the Chinese government.
  - Chinese people who support the One-child Policy may have been influenced by propaganda in support of the policy. They may also have been influenced by the fact that single-child families have become a societal norm because this 'ideal' is now accepted by so many Chinese people.
3. Explain why a person in China may disagree with the people in the quotes that the One-child Policy was necessary. (2 marks—one for each well-analyzed perspective.) (Possible answers)
- The quotes have nothing to do with people's rights over their own bodies or their rights to have as many children as they want.
  - They might also feel that a viewpoint is one thing, but the policy is harshly enforced.
  - They might also bring up that the population was already decreasing before the policy was introduced, so while some of the Chinese government's points are valid, the policy and punishments associated with it were not necessary.

## **ANSWER KEY FOR ACTIVITY 3: VIDEO ANALYSIS OF "CHINA: UNNATURAL SELECTION," AL JAZEERA ENGLISH**

### **PART 1: LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING**

There are many consequences of the One-child Policy. To the best of your ability, fill in the consequences mentioned in the documentary. Share your answers with a partner after the video to fill in any gaps you missed.

#### **Consequences for China as a whole**

##### *Social*

1. Gender imbalance
2. Aging population

##### *Economic*

1. Shrinking pool of cheap labour
2. Burden of smaller working-age population supporting larger aging population
3. Less population = less environmental and economic "burden"

#### **Consequences for individual people in China**

##### *Social*

1. Difficulty for marriage-age men to find a wife ("bachelor village" phenomenon)
2. Loneliness for only children, other social adjustment challenges
3. Caring for aging parents
4. Forced abortions/sterilizations/abductions of children
5. Discrimination against those who cannot afford to pay the fee to have more than one child

##### *Economic*

1. "Bride price" required for finding a wife
2. Fine for a couple having a child "above quota"
3. Corruption of local officials

#### **Under the One-child Policy, under what circumstances could a person in China have more than one child?**

1. If a parent is a member of an ethnic minority (e.g., Tibetan, Mongolian, etc.).
2. If parents live in a rural area AND their first child is a girl.
3. (Beginning in 2013) If both parents are only children.
4. If a couple gives birth to two twins (although this point is not specifically addressed in the video or readings)

### **What are the specific consequences for men in China?**

1. Difficulty finding a wife because there are fewer females than males
2. Difficulty saving enough money to pay the “bride price” or accumulate other things (car, hukou in a large city, etc.) for a wife

#### PART 2: APPLY

**Some of the people interviewed in the film claim that the state had no right to determine the number of children that a person in China can have. Argue both sides.**

Reasons why the state SHOULD determine the number of children a citizen can have.

1. It is a way to lessen the pressure on natural resources, such as water and available land.
2. It is a way to encourage economic growth because the state doesn't have to divide its resources among so many people.

Reasons why the state should NOT determine the number of children a citizen can have.

1. It is a basic human right—not the state's right—to control people's bodies and reproduction
2. There are more indirect ways to encourage slower population growth, such as urbanization and family planning campaigns.

#### PART 3: REACT

**Some of the people in the film speak of kidnapping, forced abortions, and forced sterilizations by local Chinese officials. Write a personal reaction to these testimonies.**

Answers will depend on individual students' responses to the film.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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