



Sample History Lesson on Deng Xiaoping and the Democracy Movement

Aim: To discuss the “Fifth Modernisation” – to see how Deng dealt with the demands for more political freedom; to analyse the methods he used; to determine the extent to which he was successful.

Key events: Democracy Wall in 1978/79; Fang Lizhi and the Student Movement in 1986; Tiananmen Square 1989

Extension: Hong Kong pro-democracy protests today

Resources:

- The Democracy Wall and Wei Jingsheng. <http://www.tsquare.tv/wall/>
- Obituary of Fang Lizhi (also used for evaluation exercise) from The Economist <http://www.economist.com/node/21552551>
- Note on Hu Yaobang and a poster (also for evaluation). <http://chinese posters.net/themes/huyaobang.php>
- Contemporary BBC account of the massacre  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJBnHMPHGRY>
- Current comments on Tiananmen. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFWJcjPsV7E> 

Task: Students to work in groups to make presentations (in chronological order of events) on each source to the rest of the class. Students are asked to do the following:

- To briefly give the background to their topic (explain its significance)
- To describe the source
- To discuss the origin, purpose, value and limitation of the source for historians studying this topic

Key Questions for class discussion:

Why did the Chinese Politburo decide to use force?

How did this affect the continued economic progress of China?

How did events in the USSR affect the decision to suppress Tiananmen?

What has been the impact of Tiananmen on China until today?

Outcome:

To see how Deng used the “Fifth Modernisation” to challenge Hua Guofeng, but then tried to stifle it by using force.

To determine if there were links to economic progress or problems (look back to class on 4 Modernisations)

Link to the changes in the USSR and E. Europe in 1989.