

“Composition of the Chinese Nation”
Worksheet

Topic	Composition of the Chinese Nation
Relevant themes	Theme 1: Hong Kong under “One Country, Two Systems” Topic: Situation of the country and sense of national identity Learning focus: Composition of the Chinese Nation
Overall design rationale	<p>The content of this worksheet covers the definition, origin and development of the Chinese nation. Students are expected to understand that China is a unified multi-ethnic country, while learning about our country’s governance approaches, philosophy and specific policies for ethnic minorities, and understand how ethnic minorities can benefit from national policies from economic, cultural and other aspects at the same time. Finally, teachers could guide students to recognise the importance of inclusiveness of the Chinese nation at the end of the lesson.</p> <p>The classroom learning and teaching activities of the entire worksheet include watching videos, reading texts and pictures, and conducting group activities and presentation.</p> <p>The extended part of this worksheet includes an introduction to different ethnic minorities. Teachers can encourage students to further study the topic after lesson, so as to understand the characteristics of some ethnic minorities in our country.</p>
Teaching objectives	<p>Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To understand the definition, origin and development of the Chinese nation ● To understand our country’s governance, approaches and policies for ethnic minorities ● To understand that China is a unified multi-ethnic country, as well as the significance of inclusiveness of the Chinese nation. <p>Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The ability to comprehend and apply different types of data (including videos, texts and pictures) ● The ability to read and collect information ● The ability to compare similarities and differences <p>Values and attitudes:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respect and appreciate the cultures of different ethnic minorities in China, and cultivate the spirit of harmony in diversity
Time required	1-2 lessons (35-40 minutes per lesson)
Prior knowledge	<p>In the learning stages of the basic education and prior to this lesson, students should have already acquired the following related learning experiences and fundamental knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of the Chinese nation has a long history • China is a multi-ethnic country with the majority of the population belongs to the Han ethnic group

Part A: Lesson preparation

Activity 1: Watch the video

Video of Educational MultiMedia (EMM), CDI, EDB: “中華民族面面觀”
(Watch the part of 00:01-09:38)

URL:

https://emm.edcity.hk/media/%E4%B8%AD%E8%8F%AF%E6%B0%91%E6%97%8F%E9%9D%A2%E9%9D%A2%E8%A7%80/0_rdduz06j



Activity 2: Read the brief introduction of the Chinese nation

Source A: What is the “Chinese nation”?

China is a unified multi-ethnic country, and all the ethnic groups settled on Chinese territory, including the ethnic groups that existed in contemporary and historical times but have now disappeared, are collectively referred to as the Chinese nation. **The term “Chinese nation” is an ethnological term appearing only in modern times, but the nation has existed for thousands of years.** About 5,000 years ago in the era of the Five Emperors, when Emperor Yu Shun, the tribal alliance developed into ethnic groups and a country, and the Chinese nation began to form. Its earliest clan is called “Hua” , a name which has been carried on to this date. As the name of a clan, “Hua” was first seen in *Shangshu* (尚書), or *The Book of Documents*, under the chapter of Wucheng (武成) in the Zhoushu (周書) section. The ethnic name “Zhong Guo Zhu Hua” (中國諸華), began to appear in the Han Dynasty. And the term “Zhong Hua” appeared during the period of Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties after the Eastern Han Dynasty, the word “Zhong Hua” appeared. It officially showed up in legal provisions in the Tang Dynasty, that “Zhong Hua” meant China. People were called “Zhong Hua” as long as they directly accepted the political enlightenment of the emperor and conformed to the traditional Chinese culture system in practice.

Until the end of the 19th century, when the western concept of “nation”,

which refers to a community of people formed on the basis of commonalities, came to China, there was then the ethnological term of “Zhonghua minzu” (or the “Chinese nation”). While the terms of “Hua”, “Zhong Hua” or the “**Zhonghua minzu** (the Chinese nation)” have different characteristics of the times, **they have the same meaning, referring to all ethnic groups residing within the territory of China.** The Chinese nation includes 56 ethnic groups that have been officially identified, such as the Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui, and Tibetan, as well as some groups which are unidentified or yet to be identified.

Source: Translated from *What is the “Chinese nation”?* (何謂「中華民族」?). The website of the Academy of Chinese Studies. Retrieved from <https://chiculture.org.hk/tc/china-five-thousand-years/631>

Source B: Ethnic Groups in China

Identification of the 56 ethnic groups

Before the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the ruling classes in successive dynasties pursued policies of ethnic discrimination and oppression, and later referred to many ethnic groups already recognised in history as clan branches of the Han ethnic group. As a result, many ethnic minority groups concealed and changed their names. The ethnic composition of China had been in a state of ambiguity. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the CPC and the State **began implementing the policy of ethnic equality and guaranteeing the right of ethnic minority groups.** The ethnic consciousness of minority groups was aroused. Many long oppressed ethnic minority groups made their ethnic composition public and put forward the ethnic names. By 1953, more than 400 ethnic names had been registered. Nationwide ethnic identification became necessary, in order for ethnic minority groups in China to **enjoy true equality and to exercise the right of regional ethnic autonomy.** It was also intended to give full play to the enthusiasm and initiative of people of various ethnic groups, so as to promote their rapid development both economically and culturally.

Demographic distribution of ethnic minorities

According to statistics in the National Population Census Bulletin 2000, the total population of the 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under

the Central Government in the Mainland was 1,265,830,000. Among them, 1,159,400,000 were of the Han ethnic group, accounting for 91.59% of total population, while 106,430,000 were of ethnic minority groups, accounting for 8.41%. Compared with the fourth census in 1990, the Han population increased by 116,920,000 or 11.22%, while the ethnic minority population increased by 15,230,000 or 16.70%. **The proportion of the Han people in the total population decreased from 91.99% to 91.59%, while that of the ethnic minorities increased from 8.01% to 8.41%.**

Future of the Chinese nation

All ethnic groups will achieve faster development in the big family of the Motherland. With the progress of the time, the vast ethnic minority areas will be further integrated into the rapid development of the country. These regions will be further opened to the outside world. The ethnic minorities, with a brand-new look, will present themselves to the market, to the whole nation and the whole world. At the same time, as China continues to increase its overall national strength, **the country will also continue to offer more investment and support for ethnic regions, which will further promote the development these regions as well as the common prosperity of all ethnic groups.**

Source: Excerpted and translated from *Ethnic Groups in China (中華各民族)*. The website of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from http://big5.www.gov.cn/gate/big5/www.gov.cn/test/2006-04/17/content_255861.htm

Part B. Classroom learning and teaching activities

Activity 1: There are 56 ethnic groups in China. How much do you know about the following ethnic groups?

(Teachers can invite students to share their understanding of the following ethnic groups)

Mongolian	Hui	Tibetan	Miao	Uygur	Yi	Zhuang	Bouyei
Bai	Korean	Dong	Hani	Kazak	Manchu	Tujia	Yao
Daur	Dongxiang	Gaoshan	Jingpo	Kirgiz	Lahu	Naxi	She
Dai	Li	Lisu	Mulam	Qiang	Shui	Tu	Va
Achang	Blang	Maonan	Pumi	Salar	Tajik	Xibe	Gelo
Bonan	De'ang	Russian	Ewenki	Jing	Nu	Ozbek	Yugur
Drung	Oroqen	Hezhe	Jino	Lhoba	Moinba	Tartar	Han

Source: Translated from *Ethnic Groups in China*. People.cn. Retrieved from <http://politics.people.com.cn/BIG5/8198/58705/index.html>

Activity 2: Learn about China's policies and social development for ethnic minorities

Source A: Article 4 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China

All ethnic groups of the People's Republic of China are equal. The state shall protect the lawful rights and interests of all ethnic minorities and uphold and promote relations of equality, unity, mutual assistance and harmony among all ethnic groups. Discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic group are prohibited; any act that undermines the unity of ethnic groups or creates divisions among them is prohibited.

The state shall, in light of the characteristics and needs of all ethnic minorities, assist all ethnic minority areas in accelerating their economic and cultural development.

All areas inhabited by ethnic minorities shall practise regional autonomy, establish autonomous organs, and exercise the power to self-govern. All ethnic autonomous areas are inseparable parts of the People's Republic of China.

All ethnic groups shall have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages and to preserve or reform their own traditions and customs.

Source: *The Constitution of the People's Republic of China*. Retrieved from http://english.www.gov.cn/archive/lawsregulations/201911/20/content_WS5ed8856ec6d0b3f0e9499913.html

Source B: Governance policy of the Chinese Government for ethnic minorities

China is a **unified multi-ethnic country** jointly created by the people of all its ethnic groups. In the long course of historical evolution **people of all ethnic groups in China have maintained close contacts, developed interdependently, communicated and fused with one another, and stood together through weal and woe**, forming today's unified multi-ethnic Chinese nation, and promoting the development of the nation and social progress.

Regional ethnic autonomy is a basic policy that China adopts to handle problems among its ethnic groups. It means that under the unified leadership of the state, regional autonomy is practised in areas where people of ethnic minorities live in compact communities. In these areas, organs of self-government are established for the exercise of autonomy. Every ethnic autonomous area is an inseparable part of the country. **Organs of self-government in ethnic autonomous areas must follow the leadership of the central government.** The implementation of regional ethnic autonomy is beneficial to combining the country's centralism and unification with the freedom and equality of ethnic groups, integrating state laws and policies with actual conditions and specific circumstances of ethnic autonomous areas, and uniting the goal of building a wealthy, democratic, civilised and harmonious country with the unity, progress, prosperity and development of ethnic people.

Source: *China's Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development of All Ethnic Groups*. The website of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2009-09/27/content_2615773.htm

Source C: Efforts of the Chinese Government to improve the living standards of ethnic minorities and maintain their cultures

Through poverty alleviation, **there has been a substantial improvement in the incomes and welfare of the poor.** Education, healthcare, housing and drinking water are much improved. These provisions have covered all basic needs and laid the foundations for future development. Ethnic minority and ethnic minority areas have made notable progress in poverty alleviation. From 2016 to 2020, in the five autonomous regions (Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang) and three provinces with a large multi-ethnic population (Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai), **the number of the poor dropped by 15.6 million.** Extreme poverty was eliminated in all of the 28 minority ethnic groups with small population. Take Xinjiang as an example, through its proactive labour and employment policies, Xinjiang has continuously improved the people's material and cultural lives. From 2014 to 2019, the per capita disposable income in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region increased **from RMB23,200 to RMB34,700** for urban residents, and from **RMB8,724 to RMB13,100** for rural residents, with an average annual nominal growth of 8.6% and 8.9% respectively.

In addition, the freedom of ethnic minorities to use and develop their own spoken and written languages is fully protected. In China, with the exception of the Hui and Manchu that generally use Han Chinese, the other **53 ethnic minorities have their own spoken languages, and 22 ethnic minorities use a total of 28 written scripts.** The state protects by law the legitimate use of the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities **in the areas of administration and judicature, press and publishing, radio, film and television, and culture and education.** The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region publishes newspapers, books, audios, videos, and electronic publications in Han Chinese, Uygur, Kazakh, Kyrghyz, Mongolian and Xibo languages, and uses various spoken and written languages in radio and television programmes.

Sources: Translated from the following:

- *A White Paper on Poverty Alleviation: China's Experience and Contribution.* The website of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from http://big5.www.gov.cn/gate/big5/www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-04/06/content_5597952.htm
- *Seeking Happiness for People: 70 Years of Progress on Human Rights in China.* The website of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from

http://big5.www.gov.cn/gate/big5/www.gov.cn/zhengce/2019-09/22/content_5432162.htm

- *A White Paper on Employment and Labour Rights in Xinjiang*. The website of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. Retrieved from

http://big5.www.gov.cn/gate/big5/www.gov.cn/zhengce/2020-09/17/content_5544154.htm

Conclusion: Great integration of the Chinese nation

The following picture shows the integration of the Chinese nation.



Source: “中華美學的多民族融合”. The website of China Writers. Retrieved from <http://www.chinawriter.com.cn/theory/2016/2016-06-24/275034.html>

Question for thinking: How does the picture above reflect the great integration of the Chinese nation? Based on the sources in Activity 2, what is the positive significance of the integration of the Chinese nation?

Answer key:

- In the picture above, men and women wearing different ethnic costumes sing and dance together. This shows their willingness to respect and appreciate the characteristics of different ethnic groups and their coexistence in harmony.
- The integration of the Chinese nation shows its long history, as well as the breadth, tolerance and diversity of the Chinese culture. So we should cherish this invaluable culture more than ever.
- Harmonious coexistence, unity and integration among all ethnic groups promotes mutual development.

Part C: Extended learning - Get to know different ethnic minorities

Teachers divide the whole class into three groups and arrange for each group to study a designated ethnic minority. Students can refer to the following information, as well as online information about the ethnic group. Then they will report to the class on the characteristics, social development, regional infrastructure, and people's livelihood of the ethnic minority concerned.

Case 1: The Zhuang ethnic group

Zhuang is one of the populous ethnic minorities in China, mainly living in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The Zhuang people is an indigenous group in Lingnan region. They used to call themselves by some 20 different names, including “Buzhuang”, “Butu”, “Bunong”, “Buman” and “Buyayi”. After the founding of the PRC in 1949, they were collectively called “Tong” but the name “Zhuang” is universally used afterwards. The Zhuang people have their own spoken and written languages. The Zhuang language belongs to the Dai branch of the Zhuang-Dong group of the Sino-Tibetan family. The ancient Zhuang script, in the form of “sawndip” (square-shaped Zhuang character) which is phonetically consistent with the Zhuang language, was created by imitating the Chinese characters with the six traditional classification principles. In the 1950s, at the request of the Zhuang people, a writing system based on the Latin alphabet was created and is still being promoted.

As for clothing, Zhuang women generally wear blue and black, with slightly wide trouser ends, jacquard towels on the head, and aprons covered with exquisite handwork around the waist. Men often wear buttoned tops with a belt. The Zhuang area is full of wonderful peaks and beautiful waters. Guilin, a city in Guangxi Region, is famous for its marvellous landscape and is one of China's four major tourist hotspots.



Source: Translated from the website of the Association of Chinese Culture of Hong Kong. Retrieved from <http://www.acchk.org.hk/tc/history2.php>

Case 2: The Uygur ethnic group

“Uygur” is what the ethnic people calls themselves. According to historical records, Uygurs were originally nomadic herders in the areas north of China, south of Lake Baikal and between the Irtysh River and Lake Balkhash in the third century. Due to inter-tribal wars, branches of the tribes gradually migrated to Xiyu (now Xinjiang). The Uygurs have their own language and script, and they believe in Islam. The Uygur people are good at singing and dancing. Their traditional costumes are distinctive. Men wear the “chapan”, or a buttonless long robe with the left lapel covering the right one diagonally, and a rectangular silk scarf or cloth scarf tied around the waist. Rural women mostly wear cardigan vests above wide-sleeved dresses. Both men and women like to wear leather shoes and boots. Besides, Doppa hats are an integral part of Uygur clothing and one of the symbols of Uygur beauty.



Source: Translated from the website of the Association of Chinese Culture of Hong Kong. Retrieved from <http://www.acchk.org.hk/tc/history2.php>

Case 3: The Hui ethnic group

The Hui people mainly live in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The name is short for “Hui Hui”. Their ancestors were mainly migrants moving eastwards in large groups during the three westward marches of the Mongolians in the 13th century. With various factors in the course of long history, the Hui Hui ethnic group gradually came into being. The Hui people commonly speak the Han Chinese language. But they preserve some vocabulary of Arabic and Persian in daily communication and religious activities. In frontier ethnic regions, the Hui people also often use the languages of local ethnic minorities. The clothing of the Hui ethnic group is basically the same as that of the Han people. The difference is mainly reflected in the headwear. Hui men usually wear white, black, and brown brimless round caps, while women often wear hijabs.



Source: Translated from the website of the Association of Chinese Culture of Hong Kong. Retrieved from <http://www.acchk.org.hk/tc/history2.php>