Have you ever complained about your homework? Perhaps you had one or two pages of multiplication problems to solve. Perhaps your mom told you to write your spelling words three times so you would spell them correctly on Friday’s spelling test. Thirty minutes later, you are ready to play with your friends.

In elementary school, students begin school at 7:30 in the morning. They remain at school until 4:00 in the afternoon. After school, most students attend classes at learning centers. These classes include academic subjects such as Chinese, math, and science. Some children take online classes with American teachers to improve their English. Parents may also enroll their children in classes to learn calligraphy, drawing, or how to play chess. It is common for students to attend four or five additional classes on a Saturday or Sunday. Homework in elementary school usually takes one hour each night to complete.
When a child is almost finished with elementary school, his or her parents will apply for them to be admitted to the best middle schools in their city. Students may be accepted on grades alone, or the principal may ask to interview the student. Once the student is accepted, his or her family will buy a new apartment near the middle school. Moving closer to the school allows students a few extra minutes of sleep before the long school day begins. Sleep is as important as a healthy diet for growing minds and bodies. The amount of homework triples to three hours each night in middle school.

At the end of ninth grade, all students will take a six-hour exam to compete for a spot in the best high schools. The test asks questions in math, physics, biology, geography, chemistry, Chinese, and English. Depending on their score, students and their families will move to an apartment near the high school. Throughout high school, students will participate in review classes in order to prepare for the final exam of their education. The students with the highest scores will attend the best universities; just as valedictorians in the United States will have opportunities to attend the top universities.

A young person’s future in China depends on their success as a student from the beginning of their school years. The next time your teacher assigns a few pages of homework, remember that your success as a student will affect your future. If you develop good study habits now, it will be easier for you to be a strong student in the future.

About the Author
Anita Kim Venegas is the author of The Adventures of Peanut and Dutch.
Going to School in China
By Anita Kim Venegas

1. Which statement accurately compares the amount of high school graduates applying to college in China with that in the United States?

   a. There are about four times as many high school graduates applying to universities in the United States as that in China.
   b. There are about four times as many high school graduates applying to universities in China as that in the United States.
   c. There is about the same number of high school graduates applying to universities in China and the United States.
   d. None of the above.

2. Based on your answer to the first question, why do you think children in China go through such rigorous schooling from an early age?

   _____________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________

3. In elementary school, approximately how many hours per week might a child spend going to school, doing homework, and attending extra classes on the weekend?

   a. between ten and twenty hours
   b. between twenty and thirty hours
   c. between thirty and forty hours
   d. more than forty hours

4. What kinds of classes do Chinese children participate in at learning centers?

   _____________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________

5. How do Chinese students get admitted to middle school, high school, and college?

   _____________________________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________________________

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Going to School in China
By Anita Kim Venegas

Match each vocabulary word from the article with the correct definition.

_____ 1. population a. the scientific study of living things

_____ 2. calligraphy b. regular practices or routines

_____ 3. chess c. the study of the physical features of the earth and its atmospheres

_____ 4. biology

_____ 5. geography

_____ 6. valedictorians

_____ 7. enroll g. a popular strategic board game

_____ 8. habits h. those students who hold the highest academic marks in their graduating class

_____ 9. admitted i. decorative handwriting

_____ 10. participate j. officially register as a student
In the article, “Going to School in China,” you learned about the rigorous education Chinese children must undertake in order to gain the best opportunities to study at universities and obtain good jobs in the future.

On the lines below, describe three ways you can improve your study habits to help you be more successful in school. Describe one impact you hope these changes will make on your own future opportunities.

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ANSWER KEY

Going to School in China
By Anita Kim Venegas

1. Which statement accurately compares the amount of high school graduates applying to college in China with that in the United States?  b
   
   a. There are about four times as many high school graduates applying to universities in the United States as that in China.
   
   b. There are about four times as many high school graduates applying to universities in China as that in the United States.

2. Based on your answer to the first question, why do you think children in China go through such rigorous schooling from an early age?

Since there are more students in China applying to universities, they have to work hard to excel and set themselves apart from other students.

3. In elementary school, approximately how many hours per week might a child spend going to school, doing homework, and attending extra classes on the weekend?  d

   a. between ten and twenty hours
   
   b. between twenty and thirty hours
   
   c. between thirty and forty hours
   
   d. more than forty hours

4. What kinds of classes do Chinese children participate in at learning centers?

Students may take Chinese, math, science, English, calligraphy, drawing, or chess.

5. How do Chinese students get admitted to middle school, high school, and college?

Chinese students are admitted to middle school based on their grades and an interview. They must take an examination for high school and college.

Super Teacher Worksheets - www.superteacherworksheets.com
Match each vocabulary word from the article with the correct definition.

1. population  a. the scientific study of living things

2. calligraphy  b. regular practices or routines

3. chess  c. the study of the physical features of the earth and its atmospheres

4. biology  d. all the people who live in a particular country, state, town, or region

5. geography  e. received; allowed entry; let in

6. valedictorians  f. take part in something

7. enroll  g. a popular strategic board game

8. habits  h. those students who hold the highest academic marks in their graduating class

9. admitted  i. decorative handwriting

10. participate  j. officially register as a student