

# *You Can't, but Genghis Khan*



## About the Show

Fred, Joe, and Sam travel back to experience life and culture in 13th century Mongolia. And their partner in adventure is 9-year-old Temujin—the future Genghis Khan. Can the boys survive through another meal of mutton?

## Introduction

Students may be familiar with Genghis Khan only by his name and reputation as a ruthless conqueror and military strategist. In this episode and lesson, students will enjoy learning how a young boy named Temujin grew up to be the remarkable leader Genghis Khan and how he affected world history.

## Historical Background

Genghis Khan united the Mongol tribes and invaded North China, Central Asia, Iran, and South Russia. His immense empire—four times larger than the empire of Alexander the Great—stretched from Hungary to Korea.

Genghis Khan, named Temujin as a child, was born in Mongolia in the early 1160s. From the time he was young, he showed intelligence and courage, and was an excellent fighter. When the *khan*, or leader, was dying, he chose Temujin to succeed him. Temujin was called Genghis Khan, which means “emperor of all emperors” or “oceanic ruler.”

Genghis Khan was a ruthless warrior. In 1207 he led the Mongols on the first of a series of bloody invasions that would result in the conquest of much of the Asian Mainland.

Genghis Khan was able to conquer such a vast area because his army had superior training and equipment. The Mongol warriors of the early 1200s were brilliant tacticians, highly disciplined, and superbly coordinated. They were hardy men who grew up hunting on horseback,

## Curriculum Connections

- Asian history
- conquerors
- empires
- Genghis Khan
- inventions
- leaders
- military strategy
- world history

## Subject Areas

- language arts
- social studies
- science



# *You Can't, but Genghis Khan*



## **Historical Background** *continued*

which made them more skilled in battle than men who grew up on farms or in cities. The Mongol horsemen were fast moving because they did not wear heavy armor. Their invention of stirrups further enhanced their superior horsemanship.

Genghis Khan was a gifted leader and manager. A written record of his accomplishments helped spread his fame and glory. He created seals of office so people could determine the validity of documents. He appointed a supreme officer of the law, who collected and preserved all judicial decisions, supervised the trials of all those charged with wrongdoing, and had the power to issue death sentences.

Genghis Khan also created laws that helped him be an effective leader. He outlawed the practice of kidnapping women, stealing animals or possessions, and decreed that no woman could be sold into marriage. He also forbade troops and local officials to abuse people. Because he ruled such a vast empire, he tolerated a wide variety of religions.

The Mongols saw Genghis Khan as a holy warrior. Like the myth surrounding King Arthur in Britain, it was believed that one day Genghis Khan would rise from his grave and lead his people to new victories.

*Want students to get even more excited about history?*



Check out the Genghis Khan adventure at [www.timewarp trio.com/adventures/khan/](http://www.timewarp trio.com/adventures/khan/)

**Put It Back, Jack!** and other interactive games to play.

**Plentifax 487**—the ultimate time traveler's guide—to find out how Genghis Khan ruled his empire and more!

**Cool Books** that kids will love.

# Activity 1



## Poem for Two Voices

Writing poems in two “voices” is a powerful tool to help students understand that people can view the same thing differently.

### Instructions

1. Distribute copies of or excerpts from *Joyful Noise* and review the “two voices” format with the students.
2. Organize students into pairs. Assign each pair of students a poem from *Joyful Noise*. (You may want to save “Whirligig Beetles” for your most advanced readers.) Tell partners that they are going to perform their poem for the class. Give them a few minutes to practice.
3. Invite pairs to read their poems aloud. Have students give feedback about their own and their classmates’ performances. You may want to give students a chance to perform their *Joyful Noise* poem a second time.
4. Tell students they will now create a historical poem for two voices. As an example, distribute the student-written “A Poem for Two Voices” handout. Ask volunteers to read the poem aloud.
5. Brainstorm a list of ideas related to Genghis Khan that offers students the opportunity to write a poem from two perspectives, such as:
  - a Briton who believes King Arthur will return and a Mongol who believes Genghis Khan will return
  - Genghis Kahn was/was not the most effective warrior of all time
  - Genghis Kahn was a better leader than Alexander the Great/ Alexander the Great was a better leader than Genghis Kahn
  - the Monguls contributed more to military history because of their invention of the stirrups/the Vikings contributed more to military history when they developed the longship
  - a great leader must also be a great warrior/a great leader does not necessarily need to be a great warrior
6. Give partners time to research their ideas and write their poem for two voices. (Although the *Joyful Noise* poems use two columns, students may want to set up their poems in three columns, as shown in the handout: The left-hand column is one voice, the right-hand column the other, and the center column is both voices at the same time. When the two voices disagree, they speak separately. When they agree, they speak in unison in the center column.)
7. Hold a Poetry Performance for students to present their work. They may want to add simple props to help dramatize their roles.

### Objectives

- to define and explain point of view
- to take on the voice of a character
- to write cooperatively with a partner

### Materials

- copies of or excerpts from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices* by Paul Fleischman. (HarperTrophy, 1992. Also available as an audiotope.)
- “A Poem for Two Voices” handout

### Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**  
*Culture:* Students explain how information and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- **NCTE/IRA**  
Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

# A Poem for Two Voices

by Anna Boden and Claire Finn

## *Taino*

who unnecessarily burden  
themselves with heavy cloth?

We come to greet your great canoe.

gifts to welcome you to our village.

although our languages differ.

teach you our way of life,  
show you how to live off the land.  
We'll continue to live as we have.

we invite you to spend the night, eat well,  
and revive yourselves in our village.

Our culture will live.

Used by permission of Anna Boden and Claire Finn.

Who are these strangers

Have they no pride?

We bear

We'll get along

We shall

Strangers

## *Columbus*

who stand before us, undignified,  
naked in the morning air?

We present ourselves to you in the name  
of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand.

trinkets to trade with you,  
and possibly change you.

as long as you bring us wealth.

spread Christianity,  
gain riches for her Highness.

Our search for new riches  
will continue.

we claim this land for the  
Spanish empire.

Our plans will thrive.

# Activity 2



## *No Vehicles in the Park*

While students often complain about rules, they seldom think about how to create them. Students may not understand the complexities of making rules that work but don't impinge on basic freedoms.

This law-related exercise will help students think about the way rules and laws are written and what constitutes a "good" rule or law.

### Instructions

1. Discuss with students the need for rules and laws, especially in government, and the importance of creating laws or reforming existing rules. Before Genghis Khan brought a system of laws to his empire, local lords could impose whatever punishment they wanted. For instance, one lord could just reprimand a thief while another could order the thief's hand cut off.
2. Distribute the "No Vehicles in the Park" handout and read it together. Brainstorm a list of as many different vehicles as possible. Then ask students to suggest possible exceptions to the "No Vehicles in the Park" rule. For example, a runner might want to park her car next to the track. A babysitter pushing a stroller might want to go through the park to the library. Write the ideas on the board or flip chart.
3. Set up a Town Council meeting to consider these exceptions. Have some students represent the Town Council and some represent those who want to appeal the decision. (You may want to find out how the local government is organized and use that model.)
4. Decide who will run the meeting, how long it will be, and what the format is. Have students present their appeals to the Town Council.
5. Now the Town Council must reconsider its decision. Have the group meet to rewrite the rule with new provisions. Before they can pass the new law, they must consult with those appealing the original law. Is the new law fair? Does it take all the situations into consideration?
6. Hold a final vote to confirm the new law. Once passed, have students design a new park sign that states the new rules.

### Take It Further

Have students write a newspaper editorial explaining the new law and the reasons for each of its provisions.

### Objectives

- to understand the meaning and complexities of rules and laws
- to work cooperatively and problem-solve

### Materials

- "No Vehicles in the Park" handout
- writing and drawing supplies
- construction paper

### Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**  
*Power, Authority, and Governance:* Students examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles, and status of the individual in relation to the general welfare. Students identify and interpret sources and examples of rights and responsibilities of citizens.
- **NCTE/IRA**  
Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e. g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

## No Vehicles in the Park

A young child was almost hit by a car in the park next to the school. Although the child was unhurt—he moved out of the way in time—it's clear that having vehicles in the park may be dangerous. The Town Council meets and decides that parks are for people, not cars, and passes a simple law: No Vehicles in the Park.

Then people start asking questions: What about ambulances and police cruisers? What about an electric wheelchair? What about bicycles, scooters, in-line skates, or skateboards? The Town Council is bombarded by requests for exceptions. They must meet again to reconsider their original law. How can they make a law that protects people's rights as well as their safety?



## Recommended Books

### For Teachers

***Empires Beyond the Great Wall***  
by Adam Kessler. (University of Washington Press, 1997)  
Based on an exhibit of the Los Angeles Natural History Museum and China's Inner Mongolia Museum, this book explores the cultural history of Mongol nomads.

***Genghis Khan: His Life and Legacy***  
by Paul Ratchnevsky.  
(Blackwell Publishers, 1993)  
A thorough examination of the life and achievements of Genghis Khan.

***Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World***  
by Jack Weatherford. (Crown, 2004)  
A colorful retelling of the famous conqueror's life and legacy.

***Warriors of the Steppe***  
by Erik Hildinger. (Da Capo Press, 2001)  
A military history of the nomadic peoples of central Asia.

### For Students

#### Fiction

***The Kite Rider***  
by Geraldine McCaughrean.  
(HarperTrophy, 2003)  
A 12-year-old boy becomes a skilled kite rider to avenge the death of his father in the court of Kublai Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan).

#### Nonfiction

***Genghis Khan*** by Brenda Lange.  
(Chelsea House, 2003)  
Ancient World Leaders series.  
Examines the life and career of Genghis Khan.

***Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire***  
by Miriam Greenblatt. (Benchmark, 2001)  
An overview of the leader and his people.

***Life in Genghis Khan's Mongolia***  
by Robert Taylor. (Lucent Books, 2000)  
Explores Genghis Khan's leadership and government, as well as details about daily life during his reign.

#### Web sites

**GENGHIS KHAN ON THE WEB**  
[www.isidore-of-seville.com/genghis/](http://www.isidore-of-seville.com/genghis/)  
This site collects, sorts, and annotates resources about Genghis Khan.

**GENGHIS KHAN: TREASURES OF INNER MONGOLIA**  
<http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/vexhibit/genghis/intro.htm>  
The Provincial Museum of Alberta offers a virtual exhibit of Mongolian artifacts, including a picture gallery, biography of Genghis Khan, timeline, map, and links.

**THE LAND OF GENGHIS KHAN**  
[www.nationalgeographic.com/genghis/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/genghis/)  
This site offers photographs of Mongolia today, a timeline of Genghis Khan's life, and a map of his empire.

**THE LEGACY OF GENGHIS KHAN**  
[lacma.org/khan/index\\_flash.htm](http://lacma.org/khan/index_flash.htm)  
The Los Angeles County Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art organized an exhibit in 2003 on the "Courtly Arts and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353." This exhibit site includes photographs of artifacts with detailed captions and a map of the Mongol empire.

#### TIME WARP TRIO

[www.timewarp trio.com](http://www.timewarp trio.com)

This site for kids includes interactive games, fascinating facts, and booklists that help make the past come alive.

#### Please note:

Although these sites were verified at the time of publication, Web site addresses and content are frequently subject to change.