

AROUND THE WORLD



WEI WANTS TO STAY FREE



PragerU is redefining how people think about media and education. Watched millions of times every day, PragerU is the world's leading nonprofit with educational, entertaining, pro-American videos for every age. From intellectual, fact-based 5-Minute Videos and powerful personal storytelling to animated shows made just for kids—PragerU helps people of all ages think and live better.

PragerU Kids teaches history, civics, financial literacy, and American values to children across the K-12th grade spectrum. With kids shows, books, and educational resources for every grade, PragerU Kids offers content that parents and teachers trust and children love. Watch for free and learn more at PragerUkids.com.

All text and illustrations Copyright © 2026 Prager University Foundation.

All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form.

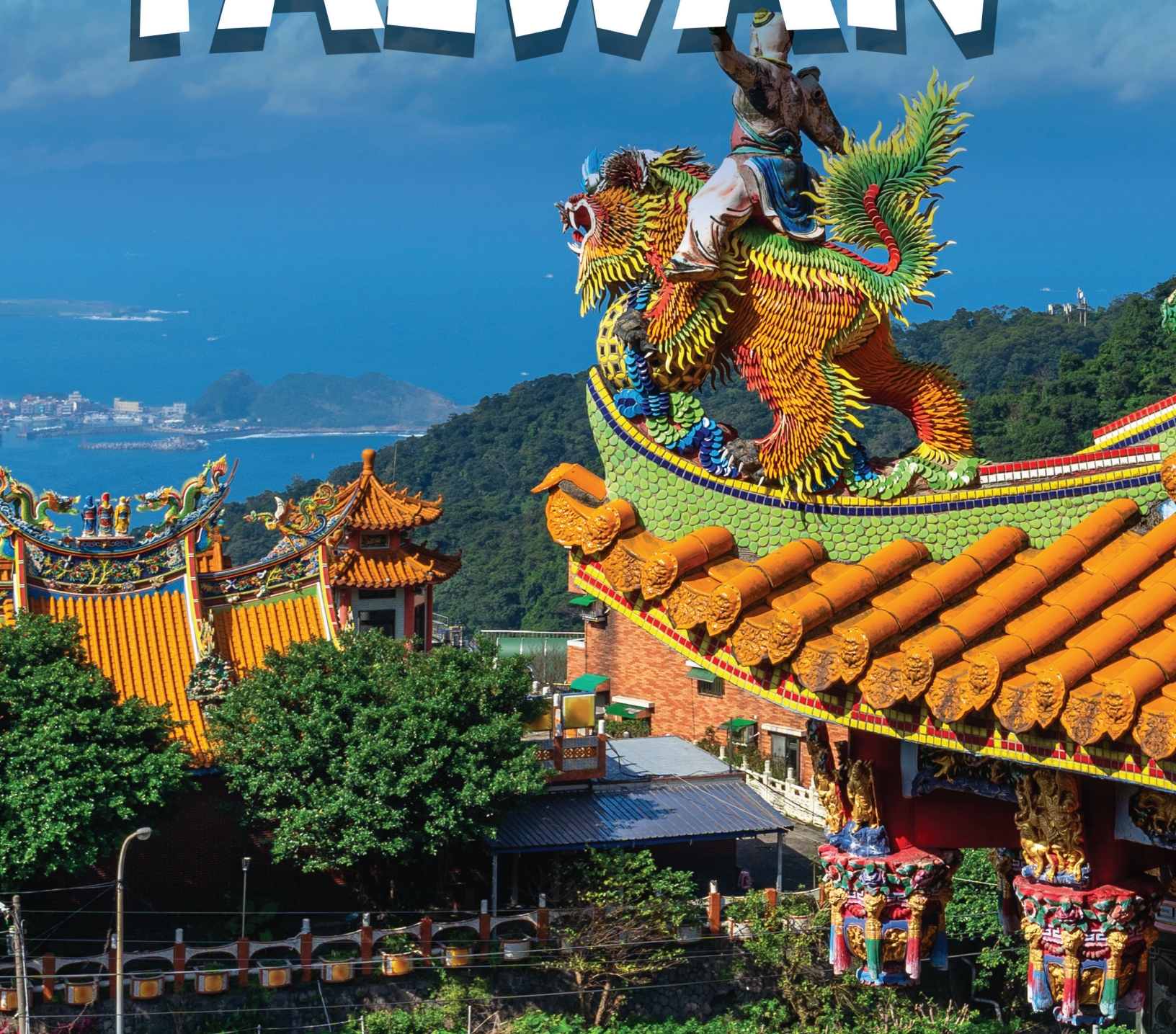
PragerU is a registered trademark of Prager University Foundation.

Published by PragerU

PragerU.com



WELCOME TO TAIWAN





Taiwan is a small island nation about a hundred miles from the coast of mainland China.

With tall, green mountains, Taiwan's gorgeous scenery complements its capital, Taipei—a bustling city with around 2.5 million people.



The island's densely packed population is very hard-working. Taiwan is the world's leading producer of **semiconductors** and the digital microchips made from them. For the last 60 years, it's been one of the four fast-growing "**Asian Tiger**" economies.

As a successful democracy so close to the powerful communist state of China, Taiwan's leaders remain wary of their neighbor. Despite sharing a language, Mandarin, and much cultural heritage





with the Chinese people, the Taiwanese have rights and freedoms that people in China lack. A free press, competitive elections, and robust **civil liberties** are a few examples. Taiwan's proximity, success, and shared history have made it a very convenient and desirable target for the Chinese government.

Although Taiwan operates as a **sovereign** nation, China claims that the island is simply a rebellious Chinese province. They have long insisted that Taiwan will eventually be "reunified" with the rest of China, but some are thinking that China is planning to take the island of Taiwan.

Semiconductor

A refined material that can conduct electricity and is used in things like computers and smartphones to help them work.

Asian Tigers

A collective nickname for the free-market economies of South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. All four countries grew tremendously during the late 20th century.

Civil Liberties

Freedoms that the government promises to protect, like speaking freely and practicing any religion of choice.

Sovereignty

The right of a state to govern its own affairs without outside interference.

TAIWAN



Taiwan is considered one of the most mountainous countries in the world.



Population size:
23.5 million

Size:
14,000 square miles



There is evidence that a land bridge existed between Taiwan and China thousands of years ago.

At 1,667 feet, Taipei 101 was the tallest building in the world from 2004 to 2009.



A group of active volcanoes sits only 10 miles from downtown Taipei.



Taiwan's population includes 16 indigenous tribes who have lived on the island for thousands of years.



Bubble tea (or "pearl milk tea") was invented in Taiwan.



Taiwan's official name, "Republic of China" (or ROC), dates back to 1912 and was the official name for the government ruling the mainland of China. After losing the Chinese Civil War to the Communist Party of China, the ROC retreated to the island of Taiwan.



Meet Wei

Wei is 17 years old. For most of his life, he's lived in Taipei with his dad, Chun-hong, his mom, Shu-fen, and his younger brother, Hao. Wei's 82-year-old grandfather—or "Wai Gong," as he prefers to be called—lives close by. Wei loves his family, but these days he keeps in touch with them through video chats and a messaging app. That's because Wei attends an international school in Hawaii, over 5,000 miles from his home.

As a senior, he's working hard on college applications with a focus on technology—the lifeblood of Taiwan. Wei and his Chinese friend Feng are both active in **Model United Nations**, where Wei's history teacher Ms. Cordell is helping him with a Model UN petition to propose Taiwan be recognized as a sovereign country. Currently, Model UN takes its cue from the real **United Nations**, which does not recognize Taiwan as a **member state**. Wei wants the petition to succeed... but he also hopes it will boost his profile for dream schools like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) or Stanford University.

School is exciting, but Wei is glad to be home now on break. With his house being a few blocks away from Taipei's fast, clean subway system, Wei has lots to see and do. Plus, the food at school (or, as Wei calls it, "slop") doesn't compare to his mom's delicious cooking. When she serves marinated pork belly, Wei is in heaven!

Model United Nations

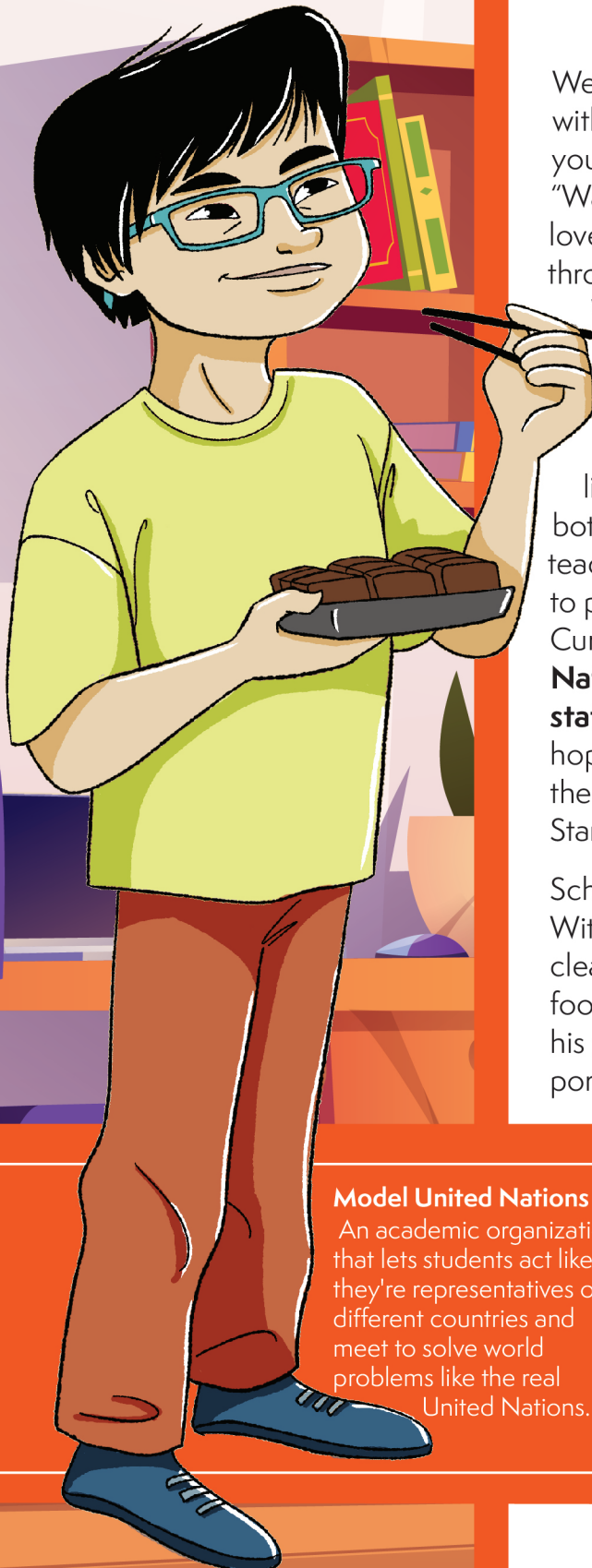
An academic organization that lets students act like they're representatives of different countries and meet to solve world problems like the real United Nations.

United Nations

An international body where member nations discuss global issues with a focus on promoting peace and humanitarian assistance. The UN is often controversial due to its inability to address threats and the way it undermines nations' sovereignty.

Member State

A country that is officially part of an international organization, like the United Nations, and has agreed to follow its rules and contribute to its goals.



An illustration of a man and a woman in a traditional Chinese setting. The man, on the left, is wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt and blue trousers. The woman, on the right, is wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt and light blue trousers. They are standing in front of a window with a red lantern hanging above them. The man is looking at the woman, who is looking towards the viewer. The background is a simple illustration of a traditional Chinese building with a red lantern and a window.

Home and Family

Chun-hong and Shu-fen were both raised in Taipei. Chun-hong works in manufacturing for a small company that helps ship semiconductors and microchips overseas. Shu-fen finished college, but instead of working, she stayed home to raise Wei and Hao.

When Wei thinks about it, his family is the most important reason for coming home during school breaks. He also takes pride in Taiwan and its culture, which enshrines respect, family, and honor. But Wei is *not* happy about one thing—his upcoming **compulsory military service**. Most Taiwanese men serve right out of high school, and Wei is worried that the required four months might complicate his efforts to attend a dream college in the U.S.

Compulsory Military Service

"兵役" (bīng yì), the term used in Taiwan, translates to "military service" and refers to the mandatory enlistment of citizens into the national military forces, typically for a set period of time, as determined by the government.



Then vs. Now

Wei understands the need for an active military, but he doesn't understand why *everyone* needs to serve. For most of Wei's life, China's threats to take over Taiwan have been a lot of bluster. Even though he grew up hearing Wai Gong's tales of defending Taiwan's outlying islands from Chinese attacks in 1949, the threat of a modern invasion doesn't seem like a real possibility. Wei admires his grandfather's valor... but it's *not* 50 years ago when everyone thought another military conflict with China would erupt at any moment. Plus, friends like Feng don't think China would ever challenge Taiwan's military openly or harm its hard-working citizens.

Wei occasionally teases his parents for taking the threat of China too seriously. But Chun-hong reminds Wei that, should the **People's Republic of China (PRC)** invade or subject Taiwan's citizens to its plan of "reunification" another way, they would lose the freedoms they've all enjoyed. Chun-hong reminds Wei about China's **One China** policy and the fact that China's leaders view Taiwan as part of their territory. Should China ever get its way, Taiwan would be brought under the control of the **Chinese Communist Party (CCP)**.

People's Republic of China (PRC)

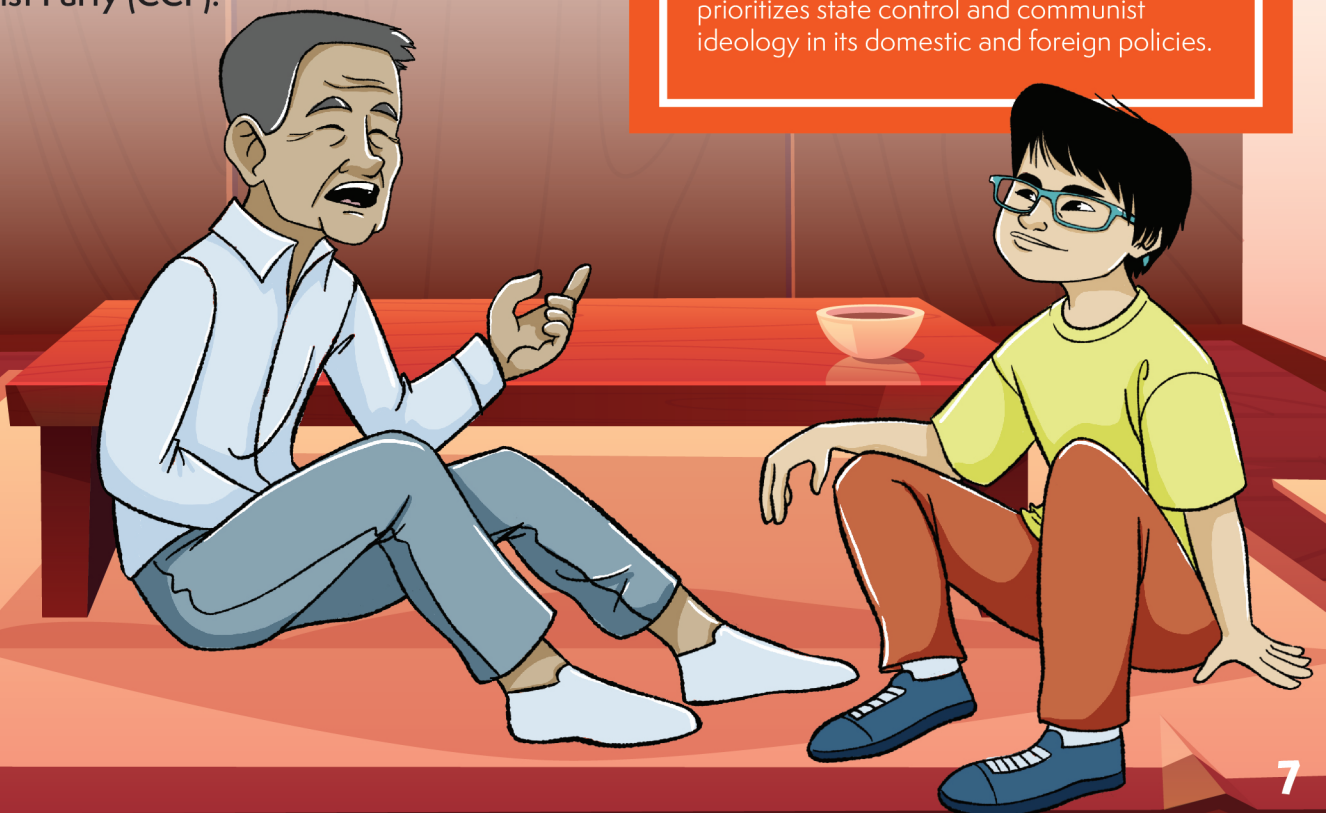
China's official name, established in 1949 after the Chinese Civil War. Despite the name, it is not a republic but a single-party state ruled by the Communist Party of China.

One China

A diplomatic policy claiming there is only one China. For many decades after 1949, the PRC and Taiwan both used this policy to argue that they were the one true representative of the Chinese people. The PRC still uses this policy to claim control over Taiwan.

Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

The government that rules China. The CCP prioritizes state control and communist ideology in its domestic and foreign policies.





Taiwan's Complicated History

From many talks with his family, Wei has a clear picture of Taiwan's history as an independent country. He knows that imperial China, then ruled by emperors under the Qing Dynasty, governed Taiwan for two centuries before Japan took control in 1895. As Wai Gong reminds him, "That's one reason why China will always view Taiwan as part of itself, like a prodigal son who refuses to come home."

Prior to and during World War II, Japan expanded aggressively throughout Asia, occupying China and many other Asian countries. The Japanese committed many atrocities against the Chinese during this time. After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941, the United States entered the war and, after four years of brutal fighting, defeated Japan in 1945. But even though Japan's defeat and withdrawal were a cause for celebration, another troubled chapter was just beginning. On the heels of World War II, a civil war broke out in China, pitting the Nationalist army, led by Chiang Kai-shek, against the Communists, led by Mao Zedong. The U.S. government tried to broker peace—many times—but ultimately failed. The U.S. worked to help the **Nationalists**, while the Soviet Union gave enormous aid to the **Communists**. In late 1949, the Nationalists were defeated and fled to Taiwan, where Chiang Kai-shek imposed **martial law**.

But much to the surprise of mainland China, and in stark contrast to the PRC, Taiwan flourished. The economy grew under **free market capitalism**. In 1987, Taiwan ended martial law as freedom, literacy, and living standards all blossomed. In 1996, the tiny country held its first direct presidential election, becoming a full **representative democracy**.

Nationalist

Someone who supports the interests of a particular nation, with the goal of promoting its sovereignty, unity, and cultural identity. In the context of China, the government under Chiang Kai-shek that began in the 1920s led by the Kuomintang Party.

Communist

Someone who supports government control of property, industry, and almost every aspect of people's lives. In the context of China, the political group led by Mao Zedong.

Martial Law

A strict form of control where the military takes over normal government functions, typically in response to a crisis or emergency.

Free Market Capitalism

An economic system where people own businesses and determine prices through competition. Free market capitalism operates with minimal government intervention.

Representative Democracy

A government in which the people are free, enjoy fundamental rights, and elect representatives, who then vote on laws and policies.



A Jealous Neighbor?

Taiwan's sovereignty does not sit well with the CCP. Since its founding, Taiwan has dealt with a growing threat from the country its leaders fled decades earlier. Moreover, as China grows into a military and economic superpower, its disputes over territory with Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines have intensified.

After watching China proclaim its aspirations to expand control, Wei's parents have no illusions about their larger neighbor's intentions. In a haunting confirmation of their fears, Chinese President Xi Jinping has ramped up the **rhetoric** on retaking Taiwan. In one speech, he even called making Taiwan part of China central to the communist party's "historic mission" and a policy they will pursue with "unshakable commitment."

Wei, however, is not worried. In an online chat with Feng, a conversation about the Model UN petition to include Taiwan turned into a casual talk about President Xi's speech. Feng assured Wei it was nothing to worry about.

"It's just tough talk," Feng said. "Plus, people in China and Taiwan have more in common than they realize."

Wei doesn't share his family's worries, but the news they've all been seeing is more and more ominous. The whole country is watching closely as Chinese warships sail within viewing distance and Chinese fighter planes carve paths through Taiwan's **Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ)**.

But that's happened before, Wei tells himself. It's nothing to get worked up about.

Rhetoric

Words or phrases meant to persuade or motivate someone (or a whole population) toward a particular goal.

Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ)

An area of airspace over land or water in which a country identifies, locates, and controls all aircraft in the interest of national security.





Flights Canceled

The last few days have been a whirlwind. All of a sudden, Taiwan's ongoing conflict with China feels much closer to home. Because of the Chinese Air Force's daily, sometimes hourly, **incursions**, more and more flights out of Taiwan have been canceled—including Wei's flight back to Hawaii! The first available flight is several weeks away.

Chun-hong and Shu-fen are encouraging Wei to look on the bright side... but that's hard when his last semester of high school is starting without him. Not wanting his grades to slip, Wei is reaching out for classwork he can start on from home. He's also eager to hear back from Ms. Cordell about the Model UN petition, which is due for a vote at the upcoming session.

Incursion

A sudden, intentional trespass over a boundary.



Taiwan's Location

Location plays a huge role in the tension between Taiwan and China. Taiwan is only a hundred miles from China, but the Taiwan-administered Kinmen Islands are less than 10 miles from the Chinese mainland.

Having a flourishing, successful democracy so close is an embarrassment to China's government. Straining things further is Taiwan's closeness to the United States and its allies, Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines. Taiwan marks the far edge of America's **sphere of influence** over the Pacific Ocean, where many important shipping lanes are located. Furthermore, the Taiwan Strait is a major route for cargo ships coming from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and as far away as Europe, which makes China's threat to block access to Taiwan with its navy the ultimate trump card.

Even though the U.S. lacks a formal alliance with Taiwan, it offers substantial military support, including training and arms. In 2020, U.S. arms sales to Taiwan exceeded \$5 billion, and this support has only increased over the last few years. This support is vital to the millions of Taiwanese citizens living in a precarious situation—and to the world's supply of semiconductors.

If China's aggressive posturing ever goes beyond **provocation**, Taiwan would be vulnerable. Moreover, a successful occupation of Taiwan would let China establish military bases that pose a threat to other countries in the region. "Reunification" would change the equation of the entire South Pacific, diminishing both Taiwan's sovereignty and the United States' capacity to help other allies.

Sphere of Influence

An area where a country has significant power and political-economic leadership.

Provocation

An action or statement meant to cause a reaction, especially anger or annoyance.





College... or Not?

Taiwan's military service requirement is also making the news. Wei and his family were stunned when President Tsai Ing-wen announced that Taiwan would be increasing the requirement from four months to a year. The requirement applies to males born after the year 2005... and that includes Wei by just a few short months.

A whole year of service? Wei wonders. Don't people know China is just bluffing? That it's no more of a threat than it has been for decades? What does Taiwan stand to gain by matching China's boastful rhetoric and inconveniencing college hopefuls like himself for a whole year? Starting college a semester late is one thing, but having to wait a year might mean applying all over again.

Even if they don't see eye to eye on the threat from China, Chun-hong and Shu-fen understand Wei's disappointment. Instead of getting in trouble or spending his time on video games like some students far from home, Wei works very hard. They hope he can find a silver lining to the situation. But when Wai Gong suggested that college can always *wait* and that he should be honored to serve his country for a year, Wei stormed out of the room.

When Wei vented his frustration to Feng, his friend seemed to understand.

"A year?" Feng laughed. "That's wild. It's like your military is trying to show off. People join China's military because they *want* to serve."



What Would “Reunification” Really Mean?

As Wei’s family suspects, China’s plan to assert control over Taiwan is a logical step in its plan to expand its power and regional dominance. Even though Taiwan’s military and the United States’ promise of help make occupation a far-off possibility—at least for now—Chun-hong and Shu-fen wonder how “reunification,” as China calls it, would really play out. Among many other things, it would mean an abrupt transformation of Taiwan’s society, culture, and economy. All of Taiwan’s 23 million people would lose many hard-won freedoms overnight.

Chun-hong sees many ways that occupation or even war with China would disrupt the semiconductor industry, creating a worldwide shortage of computer processing chips. His manufacturing company—like every other small to medium business that makes up 98% of Taiwan’s **enterprise**—would also be subject to Chinese rules and taxation. Without the free-market incentives to work hard or the right to vote, Taiwan’s successful, freedom-loving society would not be what it is today.

Finally, Wei’s desire to study at an American college would also be subject to government approval. While many Chinese students get to study at U.S. colleges, that number is declining with the rise in tensions between the two superpowers. Even if his parents could pay for it, what if China insisted that he go to a Chinese university? Or no university at all?

Enterprise

The businesses and companies that operate within a country's economy.

China Hits Home

Wei is shocked.

As if Chinese flyovers and canceled flights aren't enough, Ms. Cordell just gave him some upsetting news about his Model UN petition. When Wei's teammates presented the petition at the Model UN meeting in Honolulu, a handful of students from other schools walked out in protest. Many of them, Ms. Cordell explained, were Chinese, and some shouted mean things about Taiwan and Wei's teammates. Many students complained that the Chinese students were bullying them to reject the

Taiwan proposal. Because it caused such an uproar, Ms. Cordell had no choice but to withdraw the petition.

Is the real UN this ineffective?
Wei wonders.

What hurts the most is the fact that he was supposed to be there, defending his petition in person. Wei listed the Model UN petition as a standout achievement on his college applications. Now that it's fallen apart, what happens if someone from college admissions asks about it?

Wei is reaching out to Feng. Who knows? Maybe he and Feng can salvage the petition and present it at the next Model UN event.

Meanwhile, there have been news articles reporting up to a record of 52 daily flight incursions into Taiwanese airspace. For the first time he can remember, Wei is wondering if he's mistaken about China.

PETITION



WITHDRAWN



The United Nations

As Wei is learning, the United Nations does not always represent all countries fairly. His own disappointment with Model UN reminds him that the UN's claim to be a place where "nations can gather together, discuss common problems and find shared solutions" only goes so far. Due to China's threats and its willingness to sabotage cooperation, Taiwan is not recognized as a UN member state. Because China sits in one of the five permanent member seats of the UN Security Council, it is unlikely Taiwan will ever be recognized.

Taiwan was originally on the Security Council during the UN's first few decades of existence, but it was replaced by the PRC in 1971. The United States worked to help Taiwan maintain membership, but the UN ultimately rejected the effort. Then, China urged fellow members to pass Resolution 2758, which expelled Taiwan's government (the ROC) from the UN and insisted that Taiwan is part of China. Even though the U.S. voted against that resolution, China pressured other countries into passing it. A Taiwanese effort to join a lower-tier of the UN in 1993 also failed—again, because of China.



Like A Bad Dream

Wei finally reached Feng for a video chat... and something is clearly wrong.

"What happened with the petition?" Wei asked.

"What do you *think*?" Feng replied coolly. "It was doomed from the start because it's not based on reality. Taiwan is *not* a real country."

As Feng kept talking, Wei felt the hairs on his neck stand on end.

"How could you do that?" Wei said. "This can't be what you really think..."

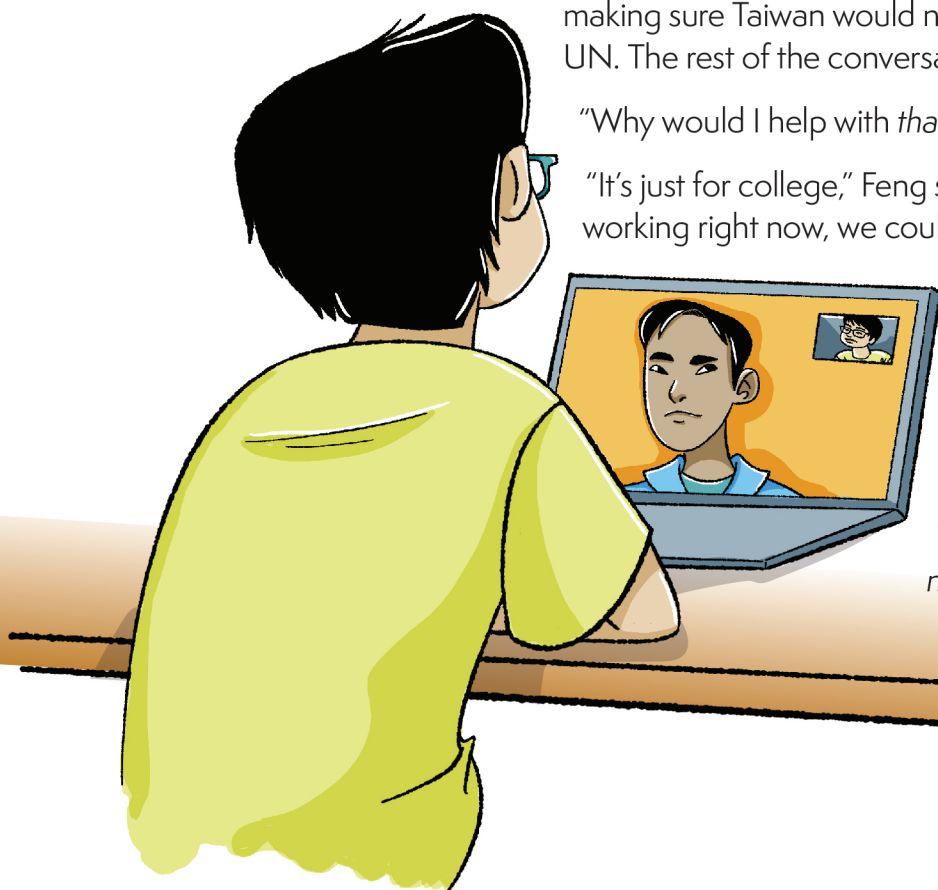
"You're upset," Feng cut in, making Wei wince. "You're worried about how it looks for college. But I've got a solution. Here, check this out."

With a feeling of dread, Wei clicked the link. It was another petition, this one asking Model UN to redefine China to *include* Taiwan. When he finished reading, Wei realized what Feng was really after: making sure Taiwan would never be an independent country in Model UN. The rest of the conversation seemed like a bad dream.

"Why would I help with *that*?" Wei fired back.

"It's just for college," Feng said. "Ms. Cordell said if you and I start working right now, we could bring it to the next gathering for a vote... and I could pull some strings to get it passed. Then Taiwan would be represented as part of China, where it belongs. Plus, you'd get your glorious achievement for your college applications."

Wei just shook his head. College or not, no way.





“Re-Education” and China’s Tactics

Feng’s proposal was eye-opening, and the betrayal hurt. But thinking about what happened reminds Wei of some other facts about China—facts suggesting that “reunification” may *not* be best for everyone.

China has absorbed other countries in the past, and its track record on **human rights** is alarming. Since taking over Tibet in 1950, China has placed a million Tibetan children in government-run boarding schools for “**re-education**” with the goal of forcing them into the majority Han language and culture. Activists promoting the idea of an independent Tibet have been persecuted. Within its own northwestern province, China has also sent over a million **Uyghur** Muslims to labor camps, subjecting them to “re-education” with horrific conditions and even forced labor.

Human Rights

The basic, or natural, rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world that no one has the right to take away.

Re-Education

A program where people are taught to change their beliefs to match what the government or other groups think is correct.

Uyghur

An ethnic group of mostly Muslims living mainly in China’s Xinjiang province.

Wei is realizing that China uses its size and economic might to bully people around the world. With nearly a billion and a half people, access to China as a marketplace for goods or entertainment gives its leadership incredible power. In just one example, a Chinese-government-owned newspaper and social media trolls pressured an NBA player who called Taiwan a country to apologize. Wrestler and *Fast and Furious* 9 star John Cena also apologized after accidentally referring to Taiwan as a country. China also uses the presence of 600,000 students studying abroad each year to protect its image. That means monitoring the speech and online activities of students like Feng.





Another Delay

Wei's flight back to Hawaii has been delayed... *again*. Even though Wei is doing classwork from home, his principal emailed him explaining that there is no independent study option. If Wei misses his flight back in a week, he may have to drop out and attend school somewhere else.

In the meantime, Wei has been helping Hao with his homework in an effort to keep his mind off college, the incident with Feng, and his application for a **deferment** from military service. When Shu-fen asked him if he'd take Wai Gong on his annual visit to the **Taoyuan Martyrs' Shrine**, Wei agreed... in exchange for pork belly.

FLIGHT TO HAWAII

DELAYED

FLIGHT TO LONDON

DELAYED

FLIGHT TO BALI

DELAYED

FLIGHT TO NEW YORK

DELAYED

FLIGHT TO MELBOURNE

DELAYED

FLIGHT TO ENGLAND

DELAYED

Deferment

Permission to put off or even get out of military service, usually for college.

Taoyuan Martyrs' Shrine

A monument built by Japan but repurposed by Taiwan to commemorate those killed in the Chinese Civil War.

Out with Wai Gong

After saying a prayer together at the peaceful shrine, Wai Gong convinces Wei to join him on a hike to the lookout point above a nearby popular beach. The hike takes a long time. Wai Gong goes slowly, using his walking stick and Wei's arm to pull himself up the trail—but when they see the warm blue ocean with the ribbon of sand below, smiles break out.

Before long, though, they spot the warships.

"There," Wai Gong squints, pulling out a pair of small binoculars. "Two of them."

They sigh. For months now, China has sailed **destroyers** through the Taiwan Strait as part of its **war games**. Wei and Wai Gong know it's also meant to intimidate them, to remind them that China sees Taiwan under its rule in the near future.

"I hope we don't have to fight again," Wai Gong says suddenly. "I'm too old to re-enlist!"

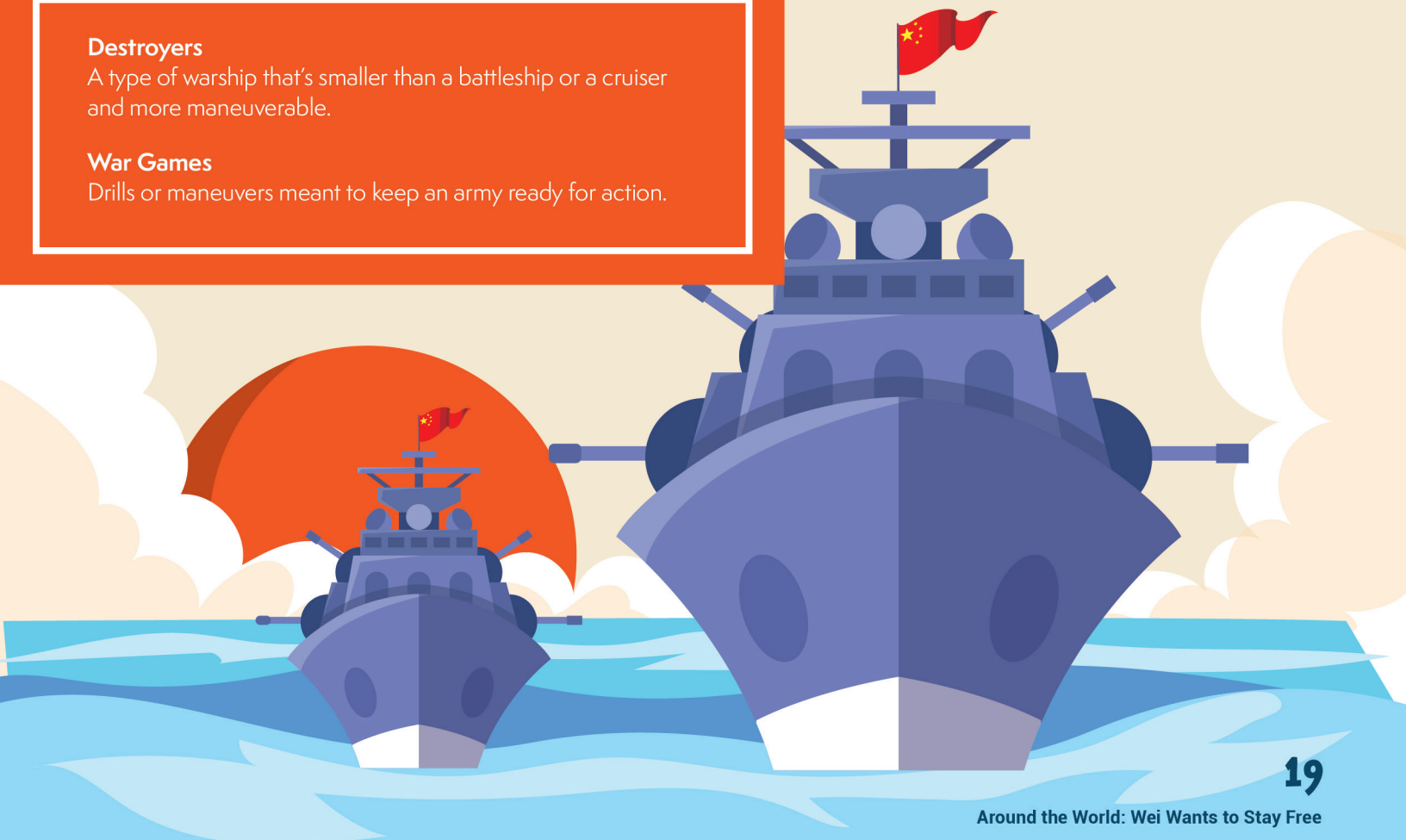
Wei laughs. For the first time in many years, he asks Wai Gong to tell him what he remembers about the decisive battle on the Kinmen Islands that stopped a communist takeover of Taiwan.

Destroyers

A type of warship that's smaller than a battleship or a cruiser and more maneuverable.

War Games

Drills or maneuvers meant to keep an army ready for action.





The Battle of Gunningtou

Near the end of the Chinese Civil War, the Nationalist forces of the **Kuomintang** retreated to the island of Taiwan. When the **People's Liberation Army (PLA)** pursued them, the Nationalists held their ground at the Kinmen Islands, less than 10 miles from China's coastline.

The battle took place from October 25-27 in 1949. Even though the PLA landed on the island with 9,000 infantry, Nationalist troops fought fiercely to stop an invasion. The victory helped secure Taiwan and a few surrounding islands, which are under Taiwan's control to this day. Historians cite the battle as a crucial moment in preventing China from invading Taiwan itself.

Kuomintang (KMT)

A political party that ruled the Republic of China (ROC) from 1927 to 1949. After losing the Chinese Civil War to the Communist Party of China (CPC), the KMT retreated to Taiwan, where it is one of the main political parties today.

People's Liberation Army (PLA)

The armed forces of the People's Republic of China (PRC). It is the world's largest military force and operates under the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC).





Tales of Battle

With a glint in his eye, Wai Gong tells the story. He was stationed in Taiwan during the battle, but his naval regiment brought supplies to Kinmen around the clock, on small ships with little to defend themselves. Wai Gong remembers the boom and whistle of artillery and how exhausted he was after nonstop supply runs.

"We barely slept that whole week... but the real hero is your great-uncle."

"What happened?" Wei asks.

Wai Gong smiles. "Let me show you."

The brass medal glimmers in Wai Gong's fingers. **"The Medal of Service,"** he says. "The army gave it to your great-uncle for what he did on Kinmen."

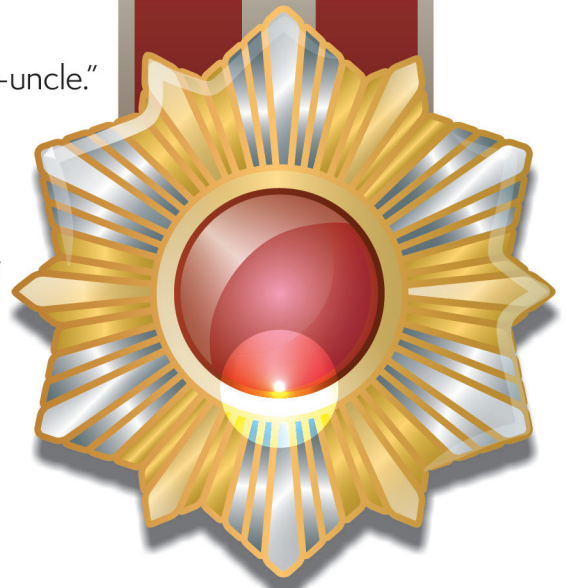
The story is more harrowing than Wei could imagine. After fighting the communists camped on the beach for days, his great-uncle was taken captive in a surprise advance. But days later, and despite being starved and beaten by his captors, his great-uncle escaped to the Nationalist side. He then brought Nationalist troops back to the communist camp, a move that helped turn the tide of the whole battle.

"He could have played it safe after he escaped," Wai Gong adds. "But he came back and fought... and he died from his wounds a week after we won that battle."

With the story finished, Wai Gong sighs.

"We all gave some, and some gave everything," he says. "Thanks to them, *you*, your parents, your brother... everyone's grown up with peace and plenty. But those things are not guaranteed."

Looking out once more at the warships, Wei ponders Wai Gong's words. He realizes that it's not just pride Wai Gong feels—although he is proud to have played a small role in keeping Taiwan free. It's also gratitude and a sense of duty that has not faded yet. Not when the war against China's tyranny is far from over.



The Medal of Service

An award given to recognize someone's dedication to the Republic of China (ROC) and its national security.

Choosing to Stay

It's been a month since Wei's flight back was canceled. He's still in Taiwan, and he's going to be there for some time. When Wei told his parents that he left the international school to finish up at a local English-speaking school in Taipei, they were astonished. But since then, having Wei around to help and spend time with Wai Gong has been an unexpected treat.

Wei's decision to stay is part of a larger plan to join the military right after he graduates. When Wei learned that he was not accepted into MIT or Stanford, the decision became easy. Even though he got into a few backup schools, Wei declined to enroll. Thanks to Wai Gong, Wei is seeing the chance to serve Taiwan—and, by extension, his family—in a whole new light.

As far as a future college goes, Wei is not worried. From talking with friends and relatives in Taiwan, Wei learned that some colleges even favor applicants coming out of the military for their leadership experience, discipline, and sense of purpose. Applying again doesn't seem so daunting. He's also learning the military offers educational pathways that focus on technology. Besides, thinking about his great-uncle's story stirs a growing sense of **patriotism**. Like his great-uncle and like Wai Gong, Wei wants to be part of something bigger than himself.

Patriotism

Feelings of love, devotion, and attachment to one's country and the values it stands for.



A Family Sendoff

It's the night before Wei goes to basic training. Of course, Shu-fen cooked all of Wei's favorites!

Then in a surprise to everyone, Wai Gong gives his grandson a tremendous gift—his great-uncle's medal!

"I think you're ready to look after it," Wai Gong explains. "It will remind you of all of us and of your family's love for independence."

Wei smiles.

Not that long ago, the thought of serving his country made him roll his eyes. But after all that has happened, and even after losing some friends at his old school, Wei knows he's making the right decision. Chinese warships are on the horizon, and Wei wants his future family to know that he—like his great-uncle and grandfather before him—helped keep their small, wonderful nation of Taiwan free.

"Now bring out that pork belly," Wai Gong laughs. "I want some before Wei eats it all!"



Medals of Valor: Taiwan's Military Honors

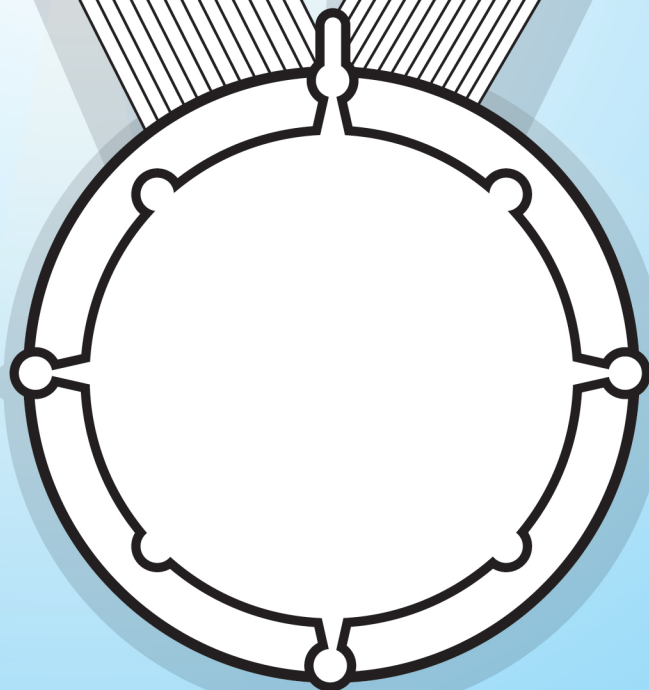
On this page are examples of three prestigious Taiwanese military medals. Use the blank outline to design your own medal. Give it a name and decide why you would award this medal to someone.



Fun Fact:

Since its establishment in 1929, the Order of Blue Sky and White Sun has been awarded fewer than 300 times, making it not only one of Taiwan's highest military honors but also one of its rarest.

Each awarding signifies a profound act of bravery and commitment to the nation's security much like the United State's Medal of Honor.



Taiwanese Braised Egg

One of the more simple dishes Shu-fen likes to serve is Taiwanese Braised Eggs. She even taught Wei how to make it so he can put together a snack whenever he's hungry.

The ingredients are simple:

- ☀ 4-6 large eggs (hard-boiled)

Put into a medium-sized pot:

- ☀ 3/4 cup soy sauce
- ☀ 1 tablespoon michiu (a rice cooking wine)
- ☀ 1 tablespoon sugar
- ☀ 1 & 1/2 teaspoons five-spice powder

Step One:

- ☀ Mix the soy sauce, michiu, sugar, and five-spice powder in a medium-sized pot.

Step Two:

- ☀ With your parent's help, hard boil the eggs. One good method is to put the eggs in room temperature water, then turn the heat on to boil.

Step Three:

- ☀ Once the boiling begins, turn off the heat and cover for 15 minutes.

Step Four:

- ☀ Remove the eggs, give them a little crack, and marinate them in the ingredients above, simmering for up to an hour.

Remove the shells and eat, eat, eat!

Wei likes to make this, then put a couple of the eggs in the refrigerator to eat the next day cold.





Taiwanese Festival Parade

Color & Decorate

Use vibrant colors to bring the scene to life.

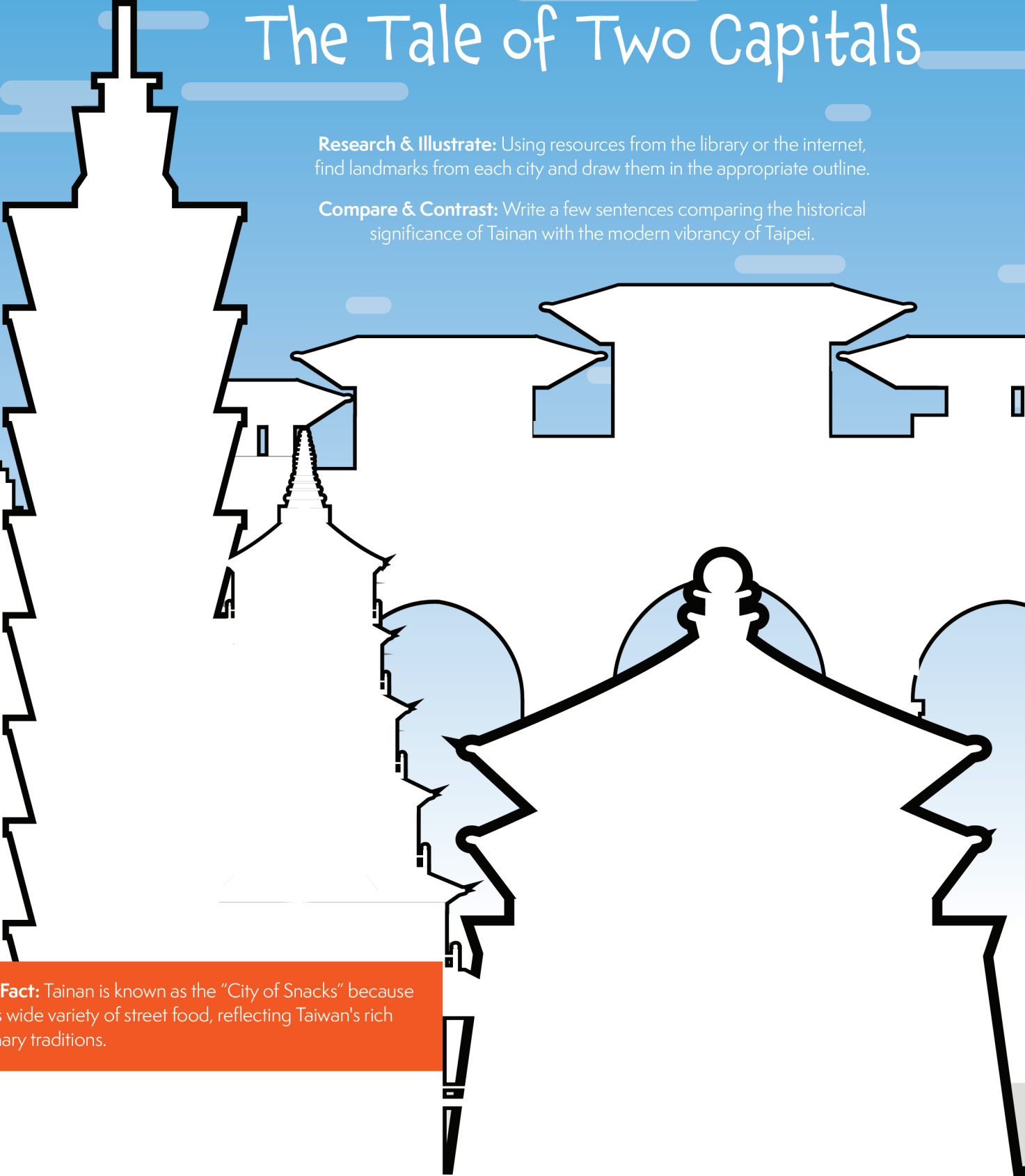
Fun Fact: The Dragon Boat Festival, known as Duanwu Festival, commemorates the poet Qu Yuan and includes dragon boat races and eating zongzi (sticky rice dumplings).



The Tale of Two Capitals

Research & Illustrate: Using resources from the library or the internet, find landmarks from each city and draw them in the appropriate outline.

Compare & Contrast: Write a few sentences comparing the historical significance of Tainan with the modern vibrancy of Taipei.



Fun Fact: Tainan is known as the “City of Snacks” because of its wide variety of street food, reflecting Taiwan's rich culinary traditions.



Writing Activity

Imagine you have been chosen to give a speech for a special day at school. In your speech, you want to express what patriotism means to you and how people can show their service and love for their country.

Write out your speech and include:

- What patriotism means to you personally.
- An example of how someone (like a famous figure or someone from your family or community) has shown their service and love for the country.
- Why you think it's important for people to serve and show patriotism towards their country.



Sources

- Allen, Anna. "Former NBA Star Dwight Howard Delivers Absurd Apology for Calling Taiwan a Country." *Washington Free Beacon*, 15 May 2023, freebeacon.com/latest-news/former-nba-star-dwight-howard-delivers-absurd-apology-for-calling-taiwan-a-country. Accessed 1 Nov. 2023.
- Cheung, Han. "Taiwan in Time: How the 'Great Victory' Was Won." *Taipei Times*, 2 Mar. 2020, taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2018/10/21/2003702748. Accessed 3 Nov. 2023.
- "China is Ratcheting Up Military Pressure on Taiwan." *The Economist*, October 9, 2021, economist.com/china/2021/10/09/china-is-ratcheting-up-military-pressure-on-taiwan. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- "China: UN Experts Alarmed by Separation of 1 Million Tibetan Children From Families and Forced Assimilation at Residential Schools." *OHCHR*, ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/02/china-un-experts-alarmed-separation-1-million-tibetan-children-families-and. Accessed 2 Nov. 2023.
- "Chinese Civil War." *Britannica*, 9 October 2023, britannica.com/event/Chinese-Civil-War. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- Maizland, Lindsay. "China's Repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang." *Council on Foreign Relations*, 22 Sept. 2022, cfr.org/backgrounder/china-xinjiang-uyghurs-muslims-repression-genocide-human-rights. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- Ni, Vincent. "John Cena 'Very Sorry' for Saying Taiwan Is a Country." *The Guardian*, 26 May 2021, theguardian.com/world/2021/may/26/john-cena-very-sorry-for-saying-taiwan-is-a-country. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- Sacks, David. "Why Is Taiwan Important to the United States?" *Council on Foreign Relations*, 20 June 2023, cfr.org/blog/why-taiwan-important-united-states. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- Stefano, Nazpari and Erica Sotoudeh. "Free Speech Risky as China Keeps Close Tabs on Its Overseas Students." *Eurasianet*, 29 Sept. 2021, eurasianet.org/free-speech-risky-as-china-keeps-close-tabs-on-its-overseas-students. Accessed 2 Nov. 2023.
- "Taiwan Increases Its Compulsory Military Service as It Faces Pressure From China." *NPR*, 27 Dec. 2022, npr.org/2022/12/27/1145594497/taiwan-compulsory-military-service-china. Accessed 2 Nov. 2023.
- "Taiwan's Dominance of the Chip Industry Makes It More Important." *The Economist*, 9 Mar. 2023, economist.com/special-report/2023/03/06/taiwans-dominance-of-the-chip-industry-makes-it-more-important. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- "Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea." *Global Conflict Tracker*, 26 June 2023, cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea. Accessed 2 Nov. 2023.
- "What Is the South China Sea Dispute?" *BBC News*, 7 July 2023, bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.
- Winkler, Sigrid. "Taiwan's UN Dilemma: To Be or Not to Be | Brookings." *Brookings*, 24 Aug. 2016, brookings.edu/articles/taiwans-un-dilemma-to-be-or-not-to-be. Accessed 23 Aug. 2023.

READY FOR MORE?

Experience all the **FREE CONTENT**
PragerU Kids has to offer!



STREAM FREE SHOWS ON YOUR TV OR TABLET

Download our FREE mobile or TV app to stream every PragerU Kids show! Or, watch any time at PragerUkids.com.



ENJOY HOURS OF FREE SHOWS

Browse over 300 educational videos for K-12, including game shows, cartoons, and inspiring reality shows.



EXPLORE WHOLESOME STORIES & AMAZING HISTORY

Download free e-books at PragerUkids.com or purchase printed copies on Amazon.



FREE RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS & PARENTS

Supplement your child's viewing experience with lesson plans & worksheets that meet educational standards.

An illustration of five diverse cartoon characters standing in front of a stylized world map. From left to right: a man in a dark grey military uniform with a peaked cap and medals; a boy in a blue and white t-shirt with the number '30' on the sleeve, holding an orange basketball; a girl with long brown hair in a blue top and yellow skirt; a girl with dark skin and braided hair in a yellow tank top and patterned skirt; and a boy in an orange t-shirt and grey shorts. The background is a solid blue color with white outlines of continents.

AROUND THE WORLD

ANIMATED SERIES

**See the story come to life
with the Around the World
animated series.**

**Watch now at
PragerUkids.com**