

Honors Literature – World History

TASK: Read the following text carefully, making all appropriate notations. Identify SOAPStone, DIDLS, PERSIAN, and other information as evidence of your research and analysis of the piece of literature. Answer the related questions on notebook paper or on this document. You may use this information for any written essay on the piece. See the text at the very bottom of these notes.

TASK: Comprehension Questions

1. Which of these ideas are most compatible with each other?
2. Which of them could be called religious? And, why?
3. Which of them could be called secular? And, why?
4. Which philosophers propose ideas that are best suited to people who want to build a strong and unified political order?

Teachings of the Rival Chinese Schools

The brief passages quoted here are taken from the writings of Confucius, Mencius, Xunzi, and Laozi. Identify whether each passage is Confucian or Daoist and explain why you made each choice.

I take no action and the people are reformed.
I enjoy peace and people become honest.
I do nothing and people become rich.
I have no desires and people return to the good and simple life.
The gentleman cherishes virtue; the inferior man cherishes possessions.
The gentleman thinks of sanctions; the inferior man thinks of personal favors.
The nature of man is evil; his goodness is acquired.
His nature being what it is, man is born, first, with a desire for gain.
If this desire is followed, strife will result and courtesy will disappear.

Keep your mouth closed.
Guard your senses.
Temper your sharpness.
Simplify your problems.
Mask your brightness.
Be at one with the dust of the earth.
This is primal union.
Personal cultivation begins with poetry, is made firm with rules of decorum, and is perfected by music.
When it is left to follow its natural feelings, human nature will do good. That's why I say it is good. If it becomes evil, it is not the fault of man's original capability.

QUESTIONS Which of these ideas are most compatible with each other? Which of them could be called religious? Which are secular? Which philosophers propose ideas that are best suited to people who want to build a strong and unified political order?