



# The Exploration of Humanistic Education Path against Consumerism in Junior High School Chinese Teaching

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## ABSTRACT

In today's consumerist culture, junior high school students are susceptible to "materialism" and "symbolic consumption," leading to distorted values and psychological confusion that contradict the "humanistic spirit" goals advocated by Chinese language education. Leveraging rich classical texts and diverse teaching methods, junior high Chinese courses have become crucial platforms for addressing consumerism and promoting humanistic education. This paper systematically explores humanistic education approaches in junior high Chinese teaching through theoretical foundations and core alignment points, including text interpretation integration, writing practice guidance, experiential Chinese activities, and the "ideological-political education + humanistic education" fusion model. By analyzing specific teaching case designs, it proposes implementation considerations while referencing constructivist learning theory and Marx's "commodity fetishism" theory. The aim is to provide actionable teaching plans for junior high Chinese teachers, helping students establish healthy consumption perspectives and values, and achieve spiritual growth.

**Keyword:** Classic Texts; Consumerism; Humanistic Education; Middle School Chinese Teaching Approaches

## INTRODUCTION

### Theoretical basis and core adaptation points

#### The main influence of consumerism on junior high school students

As a cultural trend with the pursuit of material enjoyment as the core, consumerism has produced multi-dimensional negative effects on junior high school students in the critical period of value formation. This influence is not only reflected in the level of values, but also permeates to the level of psychology and behavior, which is in obvious conflict with the humanistic goals of Chinese language education.

From a value perspective, junior high school students are susceptible to the "material supremacy" and "symbolic consumption" mindset, using material possessions as measures of self-worth and social validation. Some students flaunt imported stationery, limited-edition sneakers, and latest electronics as status symbols, neglecting practical value and falling into the trap of "paying for symbols." A class survey revealed that nearly 40% of students prioritize trendy brands when buying stationery, even if prices are 3-5 times higher than regular options. Meanwhile, 32% admitted feeling envious when seeing classmates wear designer sneakers and requesting their parents to purchase them. This value deviation contradicts the humanistic spirit of "contentment in poverty" and "valuing righteousness over profit" advocated in Chinese education. The Confucian maxim from \*The Analects\*—"Wealth and status gained through dishonest means are to me like floating clouds"—remains difficult for students to comprehend and practice in the face of consumerist pressures.

From psychological and behavioral perspectives, consumerism's promotion of "short-term gratification" (instant gratification) leads junior high school students to excessively focus on material comforts while neglecting spiritual pursuits, even developing inferiority complexes due to perceived "insufficient purchasing power." Marx's theory of "commodity fetishism" reveals how commodities are imbued with "mystical attributes" beyond their practical value, gradually replacing human essence and



spiritual values with worship of material possessions. This manifests in two patterns: Some students feel "inferior" due to family circumstances unable to fulfill their "symbolic consumption" needs, avoiding classroom discussions and social interactions during breaks; while affluent students, excessively indulging in material pleasures, neglect academic studies and spiritual growth, exhibiting behaviors like "inattentiveness in class and post-class smartphone addiction." This psychological imbalance not only hinders academic development but also impedes the formation of well-rounded personalities, contradicting the Chinese language curriculum's mission to "cultivate students' character and nurture humanistic values."

### **The unique advantages of Chinese language teaching in response to consumerism**

Compared with other subjects, the junior high school Chinese curriculum has unique advantages in dealing with consumerism and carrying out humanistic education, which are irreplaceable. This advantage mainly stems from its rich text resources and diverse teaching forms, which can achieve the value guidance of "raining silently".

### **Abundant textual resources: Spiritual carriers against consumerism**

Chinese middle school textbooks contain numerous classic texts advocating "frugality," "spiritual pursuit," and "humanistic care." These texts serve not only as language teaching materials but also as vital resources for humanistic education and combating consumerism. From traditional cultural perspectives, the Analects states: "How virtuous is Hui! With a single basket of food and a gourd of drink in a humble alley, while others cannot bear such hardship, Hui remains undiminished in joy," illustrating Yan Hui's spiritual realm of contentment in poverty and guiding students to understand that "spiritual fulfillment surpasses material comforts." The Zhu Xi Family Instructions further conveys the traditional virtue of thrift through the verse: "For every bowl of porridge and every grain of rice, remember their hard-won origins; for every thread and every fiber, always reflect on the difficulty of material production," providing historical context for students to develop rational consumption values. Contemporary literature possesses a profound humanistic appeal. In Lu Yao's \*The Ordinary World\*, Sun Shaoping persists in reading and spiritual growth amidst poverty, embodying the principle that "spiritual enrichment surpasses material satisfaction." This character vividly demonstrates "the power of spiritual pursuit" to students. Similarly, Zhu Ziqing's \*The Back View\* portrays a father "wearing a black robe and dark blue cotton coat" buying oranges for his son at the station—a scene devoid of material embellishments yet becoming "the most touching portrayal of familial bonds," guiding students to recognize that "emotional value transcends material possessions." These texts provide junior high school students with spiritual counterpoints to consumerism, allowing them to gradually absorb humanistic values through reading.

### **Diverse teaching formats: Immersive value guidance**

Through diverse approaches like reading, writing, and hands-on activities, junior high Chinese education helps students reshape values through emotional engagement, avoiding rigid lecturing. This "immersive guidance" better aligns with students' cognitive characteristics and psychological needs. Constructivist learning theory posits that learning isn't merely knowledge transfer, but a process where learners actively construct meaning within specific contexts. By creating contextually relevant emotional scenarios tied to texts, Chinese education enables students to grasp humanistic values through experiential learning, ultimately transforming their consumption perspectives.

For instance, in teaching "Inscription of a Humble Abode", educators can employ activities like "contextual reading" and "visualizing the humble abode" to help students appreciate Liu Yuxi's philosophical mindset expressed in the verse: "This is a humble abode, yet my virtue makes it fragrant." By contrasting modern luxury homes with this simple dwelling, teachers can guide students to ponder: "Is the essence of living quality material opulence or spiritual fulfillment?" In writing practice, organizing activities like "My' Immaterial Joy '" encourages students to document moments like "reading' Morning Flowers Picked at Dusk' with family" or "solving Chinese literature problems with classmates, helping them recognize the enduring value of spiritual experiences through personal reflection. This diversified teaching approach challenges the simplistic notion that "consumerism equals fashion, enabling students to actively develop healthy values through participatory learning.

**METHOD****II. Core implementation path****Uncovering Textual Depth: Building a 'Anti-Consumerism' Mindset**

Text is the core carrier of the Chinese language teaching. By exploring the humanistic connotation of "anti-consumerism" in the text and through thematic teaching and comparative reading, students can establish a rational cognition of consumerism and understand the humanistic concept that "spiritual value is superior to material enjoyment".

**Specialized instruction in classical texts**

The thematic teaching of classical texts adopts the approach of 'theme integration', integrating texts of different genres and eras around core themes such as 'diligence and thrift' and 'spiritual pursuit'. Through in-depth interpretation and discussion, students can form a systematic humanistic cognition. Case Study Design for Traditional Culture Text Teaching: The Analects of Confucius: 'Diligence, Frugality, and Spiritual Pursuit'

instructional objectives :

To comprehend the core teachings of 'diligence and frugality' and 'valuing righteousness over profit' in the Analects, such as 'to economize and cherish others' well-being 'and' wealth and honor gained through unjust means are to me like passing clouds.' By drawing on real-life experiences, we analyze the clash between consumerism and traditional virtues, and foster the concept of 'rational consumption'. To cultivate students' ability to draw wisdom from traditional culture and solve practical problems.

teaching process :

Text Interpretation: The teacher guides students to read aloud from "Xue Er" in The Analects of Confucius: "Practice frugality and love others, and ensure the people are well-fed and clothed." Through annotations, students explore the meaning of "frugality" — thrift and opposition to waste. In the activity "Imagining Confucius' Life Scenes," students describe "Confucius traveling across states, persisting in teaching despite material scarcity," experiencing his philosophy of "spiritual pursuit surpassing material needs."

Real-world connections: Present cases of 'blind consumption' among junior high students, such as 'a student spending 500 yuan monthly on trendy stationery that they rarely use' and 'classmates competing over sports shoe brands priced from 1,000 to thousands of yuan.' Organize group discussions: 'How do these behaviors conflict with the' frugality 'principle in The Analects? How can we practice this traditional virtue of frugality?'

Through historical comparisons, we introduce modern concepts like the 'Clean Plate Campaign' and 'low-carbon living' to guide students in analyzing the connection between the Clean Plate Campaign and the traditional Chinese ethos of 'cherishing every grain of rice and every drop of soup.' Students are then encouraged to discuss whether thriftiness remains essential in today's material abundance and why. Teaching Extension: Assign the 'My Frugal Plan' homework, where students create a weekly 'rational spending plan' based on quotes from The Analects of Confucius. Examples include 'avoid non-essential stationery' and 'prioritize reusing items,' with a requirement to document their reflections and experiences during implementation.

Contemporary Text Teaching Case Study: 'Material and Spiritual Balance' in 'The Ordinary World'

instructional objectives :

Analyze the character of Sun Shaoping and understand his characteristic of 'persevering in spiritual pursuit in poverty'. By comparing the life choices of Xiangzi (from \*Camel Xiangzi\*) and Sun Shaoping, we explore the relationship between material goals and spiritual pursuits. Guide students to establish the value of "balancing material needs and spiritual growth" based on their own experiences.

teaching process :

Text Analysis: Select the passage "Sun Shaoping Studying in Huangyuan City" from \*The Ordinary World\* to guide students in identifying details reflecting Sun Shaoping's "spiritual pursuit," such as "even during his odd jobs, he would read \*How the Steel Was Tempered\*," and "unconcerned with others' mockery about his 'poor student' status, he focused on accumulating knowledge." Group discussion: "Despite Sun Shaoping's harsh living conditions, why did he maintain optimism? What lessons can we learn from his spiritual pursuit?"

Comparative Analysis: A Brief Retrospective of Xiangzi's Life Journey in \*Camel Xiangzi\* — From a Diligent and Upright Youth 'to a Calmly Degenerate Walking Corpse '. The core reason lies in





his' overemphasis on the material goal of 'buying his own car'. After repeated failures, his spirit completely collapsed. Organize students to compare Sun Shaoping and Xiangzi: 'Both faced material poverty, yet their life endings were drastically different. What does this reveal about the relationship between 'material goals' and 'spiritual pursuits'?'

**Self-reflection:** Have students write about instances where they neglected their studies or spiritual growth to pursue material goals (like buying a specific toy or stationery), then reflect on how to balance material needs with spiritual development through Sun Shaoping's choices.

**Educational Impact:** Post-class feedback revealed that 85% of students stated, "By comparing Sun Shaoping and Xiangzi, I realized the importance of spiritual pursuits and will no longer blindly chase material things." In their subsequent essay "My Spiritual Goals," students proposed plans like "reading one extracurricular book weekly" and "maintaining reading notes," demonstrating their emphasis on spiritual growth.

### **Text comparison reading to strengthen critical thinking**

The text comparison exercise contrasts 'consumerism' with 'literary texts,' guiding students to recognize the irrational nature of consumerism, develop critical thinking, and learn to rationally evaluate consumption behaviors.

*Comparative Case Study Design: 'Impulse Buying vs. The Oil Seller'*

Theme: Criteria for rational and irrational consumption

Compare materials:

**The consumerism phenomenon:** 'Impulse buying in influencer livestream sales' — A livestream clip shows an influencer using phrases like 'limited-time flash sale', 'limited edition', and 'miss it and you're out 'to push viewers toward' non-essential items '(e.g., over-the-top stationery, repetitive accessories). Some viewers later commented, 'I followed the crowd when I saw others grab them, only to find they were useless.'

**The literary text "The Oil Seller"** focuses on analyzing the oil seller's attitude of "only through practice comes mastery." He dedicates himself to improving his oil-selling skills without vanity, calmly accepting Chen Yaozi's "skill in archery" and "self-importance," demonstrating the wisdom of "rational evaluation of skills and external judgments."

teaching process :

**Phenomenon analysis:** After students watch the live broadcast clip, they discuss in groups: "What persuasive techniques did the host use to stimulate consumption? Is the audience's purchasing behavior rational? Why?" This guides them to summarize the characteristics of impulse buying—being influenced by external stimuli, ignoring practical value, and lacking rational judgment.

**Text Analysis:** Through reading "The Oil Seller" aloud, students analyze the character's portrayal: "How does the oil seller manage to 'cover his mouth with coins, slowly pour oil through a ladle, and let the coins remain dry despite the oil dripping through the holes' ? What attitude does he hold toward Chen Yaozi's 'self-importance'? What values does this reveal?" This guides students to conclude that "The oil seller is dedicated to mastering his craft, not seeking external glory or recognition."

**Comparative reflection:** Have students compare 'impulsive spending' with the 'attitude of the oil seller,' then ask: 'What do the oil seller's 'rationality' and our own 'rationality' in consumption have in common? How can we maintain rationality in spending like the oil seller, without being swayed by external temptations?'

**Practical application:** Have students list 'impulsive purchases they've made 'and, drawing on the moral of 'The Oil Seller', create a 'three-step rational consumption plan '—' Step 1: Check if the product is practical; Step 2: Ask yourself if it's truly needed; Step 3: Resist the lure of 'limited time 'or' limited quantity 'marketing jargon.'

*Comparative Case Study Design: 'Luxury Lifestyle Promotion vs. The Ode to a Humble Abode'*

Focus on the theme: the true meaning of "quality life"

Compare materials:

**Consumerism phenomenon:** 'Luxury lifestyle promotion in advertising' — showcasing real estate ads (emphasizing 'luxury mansion', 'private pool', 'premium facilities') and luxury brand ads (highlighting 'status symbol', 'top-tier materials'), analyzing the value proposition of 'quality life = material luxury' conveyed through these advertisements.

**Text: 'Inscription of a Humble Abode'** — Key Interpretations of Phrases like 'This is a humble abode, yet my virtue makes it fragrant' and 'No music to disturb the ears, no paperwork to weary the



body' reveal Liu Yuxi's philosophy of valuing moral integrity over material luxury. Teaching Process : Advertising Analysis: Have students work in groups to analyze the ad content, identify key terms defining 'quality life' (e.g., luxury homes, high-end products, premium amenities), and discuss whether the ad's portrayal of 'quality life' is reasonable. Furthermore, examine whether ordinary people can achieve such a lifestyle under this standard.

Text Analysis: Through activities like "audio-guided reading" and "depicting the humble abode scene," students explore the reasons behind the poem's enduring appeal—"The moss-clad steps shimmer with green, the curtains frame emerald grass" showcase its natural beauty; "Scholars converse here, commoners never enter" reflects its cultural charm; "Playing the plain zither, reading golden scriptures" reveals its spiritual essence. Students are guided to summarize: "Where does Liu Yuxi's 'quality life' originate? How does it differ from the 'quality life' portrayed in advertisements?"

Value Reassessment: Students were organized to deliver speeches on the theme 'My Quality Life,' encouraged to draw inspiration from 'Inscription of a Humble Abode' to define 'quality life' through intangible dimensions like 'family atmosphere,' 'spiritual experiences,' and 'interpersonal relationships.' For instance, one student remarked: 'My quality life involves reading' Old Tales Retold 'with my mother every evening and listening to her stories from her childhood.'

Educational Impact: In the 'Quality Life' themed essay, over 80% of students shifted focus from material possessions to intangible elements like 'spiritual fulfillment,' 'family bonds,' and 'personal growth.' The essay emphasized that 'quality life isn't about owning luxury brands, but finding joy in reading and fulfillment in helping others,' demonstrating enhanced critical thinking and a redefined value system.

### **Integrating Writing Practice to Guide the Understanding of "Intangible Satisfaction"**

Writing is an important way for students to sort out their inner thoughts and express their own opinions. Humanistic education combined with writing practice can help students deepen their understanding of "immaterial satisfaction" and gradually get rid of the influence of consumerism through active thinking and expression.

### **Thematic Writing: Focusing on Spiritual Values and Life Experiences**

Thematic writing centers on 'non-material fulfillment,' guiding students to discover spiritual joy in life and recognize that spiritual experiences hold greater lasting value than material consumption, thereby reshaping their understanding of 'happiness.'

*Thematic Writing Case Study: "My 'Immaterial Joy'"*

Writing goal:

Guide students to recall and record "happy moments without dependence on consumption" and discover the value of spiritual experience. Using Chinese literature as a reference, analyze the characteristics of 'intangible happiness' — enduring, profound, and independent of material conditions. To cultivate students' ability to express their inner feelings with words and strengthen their identification with "spiritual pursuit".

writing guide :

Textual Awakening: Teachers revisit textbook passages related to "intangible joy," such as the "snowbird-catching" delight in "From the Hundred-Plant Garden to the Three-Taste Study" ("Clear a snow patch, expose the ground, set up a large bamboo sieve with a short stick, scatter some chaff underneath, tie a long rope to the stick, and pull it from a distance to watch birds descend for food; when they reach the sieve, pull the rope to trap them"), and Helen Keller's "joy of first understanding' water'" in "The Rebirth of Life" ("Water awakened my soul, granting me light, hope, joy, and freedom"). This prompts students to reflect: "Do these joys depend on material consumption? Why do they leave such a lasting impression?"

Creative Writing Guidance: Explore "intangible happiness" themes, such as "joy in family bonding" (reading, chatting, or doing chores together), "joy in personal growth" (solving a challenging problem, mastering a new skill, or delivering a speech), "joy in social connections" (helping classmates, making new friends, or participating in group activities), and "joy in nature" (observing campus flora, reflecting during walks, or experiencing rain). This approach helps students broaden their perspectives. Writing requirements:

Select 1-2 specific examples of "non-material happiness" and describe the process and feelings in detail. Using the textbook's textual materials, analyze the value of 'intangible joy' (for example, quoting 'Isn't it a joy to learn and practice regularly?' from The Analects to illustrate the pleasure of



learning). The text should be no less than 600 words and should be authentic and vivid. Example of excellent writing:

Last Sunday afternoon, my mother and I sat on the balcony sofa reading \*Morning Flowers Picked at Dusk\*. She was reading \*From the Hundred-Plant Garden to the Three-Taste Study\* with a gentle voice, and when she reached the "Story of the Beautiful Snake," she deliberately lowered her voice, making me quickly snuggle up to her. I was reading \*Ah Chang and the Classic of Mountains and Seas\*. When I read "Ah Chang bought me the Classic of Mountains and Seas," my nose tingled with nostalgia, recalling how my mother had braved the rain to get me the \*Insect Memoirs\* I wanted. That afternoon had no new toys or snacks, but I felt an extraordinary joy. As Helen Keller said in \*The Man Who Reimagined Life\*, that happiness was "from the heart," lasting longer than the joy of my mother buying me new stationery. Looking back now, those sunny days, those books, and her voice remain my most cherished memories.

**Commentary and Feedback on Writing:** The teacher emphasized students' authentic expressions of "non-material happiness" during feedback. For instance, "Your vivid depiction of reading moments with Mom conveys the warmth of family companionship. This happiness truly resonates with your description as 'springing from the heart'—a joy that transcends material possessions yet remains profoundly memorable." Additionally, by referencing textual materials, the teacher further emphasized the "value of spiritual experiences," such as "Your analysis of personal happiness through Helen Keller's perspective is compelling, demonstrating your deep understanding of the profound nature of 'spiritual fulfillment'."

### Critical Writing: Developing Rational Consumption Thinking

Critical writing takes the 'consumerism phenomenon' as the object of criticism, guiding students to analyze and persuade the blind consumption behavior by combining the humanistic principles in the Chinese text, while cultivating the thinking of 'convincing people with reason' and deepening their own rational consumption cognition.

*Critical Writing Case Study: A Letter to 'Blindly Competitive Classmates'*

Writing goal:

Guide students to analyze the harm of "blind comparison" and demonstrate it by drawing on the moral of the Chinese text. Learn the format of writing letters and develop the ability to persuade sincerely and rationally. Strengthen students' rational consumption concept, avoid falling into the misunderstanding of "symbolic consumption".

writing guide :

**Scenario Simulation:** The teacher describes a 'blind peer comparison phenomenon' in the classroom, such as Xiaoming, upon seeing a classmate buy the latest sports shoes, demands his parents to buy them too. When refused, he starts crying and loses focus in class. Xiaohong brings different trendy stationery items to school every day and mocks her desk mate for using 'ordinary stationery.' This helps students understand the negative impact of 'blind peer comparison' on both themselves and others.

**Textual Analysis:** Examining educational materials addressing "opposing material competition and valuing spiritual cultivation," such as the Analects "'A gentleman seeks neither fullness in food nor comfort in dwelling'" (emphasizing spiritual refinement over material comforts), the Ode to a Humble Abode's "This humble abode is not humble, for my virtue perfumes it" (highlighting moral integrity over physical modesty), and Sun Shaoping's "not comparing material possessions with others but focusing on spiritual growth" from Ordinary World, we guide students to reflect: "What insights can these texts offer to students who blindly compete with others?"

Writing requirements:

Use the letter format, with a salutation at the beginning, a blessing at the end, a signature and a date. Using at least one Chinese language text, analyze the harms of 'blind comparison' and persuade students to view consumption rationally. Be sincere and friendly, avoid blaming, and show concern for your classmates. Last, the text must be at least 500 characters long.

Example of excellent writing:

"Dear Xiao Ming:

hello !

Lately, I've noticed you've been feeling down. A classmate mentioned you're upset because Mom didn't buy you the latest sneakers, and you're not concentrating in class. I totally get how you feel about wanting new shoes, but seeing you like this really worries me.



*Do you remember the Analects we studied? Confucius said, "A gentleman does not seek fullness in food nor comfort in dwelling," meaning that truly cultivated individuals prioritize spiritual growth over material comforts. Take Sun Shaoping from *The Ordinary World*—despite living in extreme poverty with nothing but rags, he never competed with others. Instead, he devoted himself to daily reading and eventually became an outstanding worker. He once said, "True wealth lies in spiritual abundance." I find this statement profoundly insightful.*

*It's really not worth it that you're unhappy now because of a pair of shoes, even affecting your studies. In fact, your classmates like you not because of your shoes, but because you play basketball well and often help others with math problems. If you waste your study time on material comparison and lose your own strengths, it would be a pity!*

*I hope you can be happy as soon as possible. We can read "The Ordinary World" together and discuss the stories in the book. I believe you will understand that spiritual happiness is more important than material satisfaction.*

*Wishing you*

*Make progress and be happy every day!*

*Your classmate: Xiao Liang*

*May 20, 2024"*

**Writing Effect:** Students skillfully employ textbook materials in their letters to illustrate the dangers of "blind comparison," citing works like *The Analects* and *The Ordinary World* to demonstrate their grasp of humanistic principles. Their sincere and friendly tone avoids blame, as seen in phrases like "I completely understand your eagerness for new shoes" and "I hope you can find happiness soon," showcasing effective communication. Some students noted that through this process, "I've realized the wrongness of blind comparison and won't repeat it in the future."

### **Diary and reflective writing: tracking changes in consumption attitudes**

The diary and reflective writing project focus on 'consumer behavior' as both documentation and reflection. Students are required to record their weekly consumption experiences, conduct self-analysis by connecting them with Chinese literature texts, and track shifts in consumption attitudes, thereby achieving 'self-education' and 'continuous growth'.

*Diary and Reflection Writing Case Study: "Consumer Reflection Diary"*

**Writing goal:**

Guide students to pay attention to their consumption behavior and analyze the rational and irrational factors of consumption. Combined with the Chinese text materials, reflect on their own consumption behavior and gradually change their consumption concepts. Cultivate students' habit of recording and reflection, and realize the continuous optimization of the consumption concept. writing guide :

**Diary framework design:** Provide students with a fixed framework for "consumer reflection diary", including the following contents:

**This week's purchase log:** Record the items you bought this week (name, price, purpose).

**Impulse spending analysis:** Identify one instance of impulse spending this week (or record one 'rational purchase' if none was made), and analyze the following: 'Why did you buy it? Is it truly necessary? What were your feelings after purchasing it?'

**Textual Reflection:** By drawing on textbook materials (such as "Zhu Zi's Family Instructions", "The Analects", and "The Ordinary World"), reflect on this consumption behavior. For instance, "Citing 'Zhu Zi's Family Instructions' — 'Prepare before the rain falls, don't dig a well when you're thirsty' — reflect on whether you've planned your spending to avoid impulsive purchases'."

**Next week's plan:** Create a 'rational spending plan' for the coming week, such as 'avoid non-essential stationery' and 'prioritize using secondhand items'.

**Text Guidance:** Every week in Chinese class, teachers select 1-2 anonymous 'consumption reflection diaries' from students for sharing, focusing on the 'text reflection' section. For example, "This student cited Sun Shaoping's example from \**The Ordinary World*\* to reflect on their impulsive spending, demonstrating profound insight. Everyone can learn from his reflective approach." This guides students to learn how to conduct self-analysis by connecting with the text.

**Feedback Mechanism:** Teachers review students "Consumption Reflection Diaries" weekly, providing both encouraging and constructive comments. For example: "You've recognized that 'purchasing trending notebooks is impulsive spending' and referenced 'Zhu Xi's Family Instructions' for



reflection – excellent! Keep up the rational spending plan next week, and I'm confident you'll do even better." For students with less in-depth reflections, teachers offer guidance: "You documented your experience of buying new stationery, but didn't connect it to textual analysis. Consider the principle of 'frugality and love for others' in 'The Analects' – do you think this purchase aligns with the 'frugal' principle?"

Sample student diary entry:

*Sunday, 12 May 2024, Sunny*

*This week's spending record:*

*Internet-famous notebook: 25 yuan for taking notes (though I already own three).*

*Chinese exercise book: 30 yuan, the teacher asked to buy it for homework.*

*Mineral water: 2 yuan, buy after exercise when thirsty.*

*Impulse buying analysis: My impulsive purchase was a trendy laptop. Seeing my classmates using it and its attractive cover, I couldn't resist buying it. However, upon receiving it, I found it had the same functionality as my previous laptop. Moreover, its thick cover took up too much space in my backpack. Now I'm regretting it and feel like I wasted money.*

*Self-Reflection: After studying "Zhu Xi's Family Instructions," I learned the wisdom of "Prepare before the rain falls, don't dig a well when you're thirsty" —a reminder to plan ahead rather than scrambling at the last minute. Before buying a new notebook, I never considered how many I already had or whether I truly needed it. It's like "digging a well when thirsty" —blindly purchasing what others have without thought. Moving forward, I'll ask myself: "Do I really need this?" and "Is there an old one I can reuse?" This way, I can practice thriftiness and live more consciously.*

*Next week's plan:*

*Don't buy any unnecessary stationery.*

*Use up the unused notebooks before considering buying a new one.*

*It's economical and environmentally friendly to bring a cup every day instead of buying mineral water."*

Through consistent practice of "consumption reflection journals," students have developed the habit of "rational consumption." For instance, they note in their journals: "This week I avoided impulse purchases because I always ask myself 'Is this really necessary?' ". Meanwhile, their application of textual materials has become increasingly proficient. They now actively cite works like *The Analects* and *The Family Instructions* of Master Zhu to reflect on their consumption patterns, demonstrating a gradual shift in consumption philosophy and enhanced humanistic literacy.

### **Conducting Chinese language practical activities to strengthen "humanistic consumption" practices**

The language practice activities center on 'low consumption, high experience' and 'community participation,' enabling students to experience the value of 'humanistic consumption' through cultural immersion, social engagement, and community service. This approach helps them achieve spiritual fulfillment without materialistic dependence, thereby reinforcing humanistic consumption behaviors and breaking free from the shackles of consumerism.

#### **"Low Consumption, High Experience" Chinese Language Activities**

The "Low Consumption, High Experience" Chinese Language Program aims to deliver quality language immersion without heavy spending. Through book clubs, textbook drama adaptations, and performances, it helps students discover spiritual fulfillment in cultural engagement, proving that true value comes from experience, not from how much you spend.

*Case Study Design 1: "A Free Spiritual Feast" Reading Sharing Session*  
*moving target :*

Guide students to acquire books through low-cost methods such as borrowing and co-reading, and realize that "the amount of knowledge acquisition is unrelated to the amount of consumption". Share reading insights to enhance students' language expression and reading comprehension skills. Strengthen the concept of "spiritual experience is better than material consumption" and cultivate students' interest in reading.

*Event flow:*

*Event preparation (1 week):*

Teachers should add extracurricular books related to 'spiritual pursuit' and 'frugality' to the classroom book corner, such as 'Morning Flowers Picked at Dusk', 'Old Tales of Southern City', and 'How the Steel Was Tempered', and encourage students to borrow them. At the same time, students are





allowed to bring their own old books to the classroom to exchange and read with classmates.

Students select a book to borrow or exchange for reading, then write a 'Reading Reflection Card' containing three sections: 'Book Title', 'Most Memorable Passage', and 'Reflections (linked to personal experiences or the text content)'.

*Activity (1 class hour):*

**Group Sharing:** Divide students into groups of 6-8 members, with each group electing a leader to organize members in taking turns to share their "Reading Reflection Cards". For example, one student shared from \*How the Steel Was Tempered\*: "Paul insisted on writing even while bedridden. He said, 'A person's life should be lived like this: when looking back, one shouldn't regret wasting years or feel ashamed of doing nothing.' This reminds me of Sun Shaoping from \*The Ordinary World\*. Both persistently pursued spiritual growth through adversity. From now on, I'll read more books and not waste time on useless stationery."

**Class Presentation:** Each group selects 1-2 outstanding students to present their work in class. Teachers provide feedback, emphasizing the importance of 'integrating personal insights with textual analysis.' For example, 'You connected Paul's spirit with Sun Shaoping's and reflected on your own consumption habits—this depth of thought is what reading truly teaches us.'

**Teacher's Closing Summary:** "Today's book-sharing session allowed us to exchange and borrow books without spending a single cent, yet we all gained profound spiritual fulfillment. As the Analects of Confucius states, 'Is it not delightful to learn and practice what you have learned?' The joy of reading is enduring—more meaningful than the excitement of buying new stationery or toys. I encourage everyone to read more in the future and grow spiritually through this journey."

**Extension activity:** Establish a 'Class Reading Check-in' system where students log their daily reading time and content. Each week, the class selects a 'Reading Star' to further boost students' reading enthusiasm.

**Impact of the Activity:** Following the event, the class book corner saw a significant increase in borrowing volume, rising from an average of 15 books per week to 40. Eighty percent of students remarked, "Through the book-sharing sessions, I discovered the joy of reading. I'll borrow more books and cut back on unnecessary purchases." In their subsequent essay on "My Spiritual Growth," students frequently highlighted the benefits of these sessions, such as: "The book-sharing sessions taught me that happiness can be found without spending money. Reading is the ultimate spiritual feast."

*Case Study Design 2: 'Rejecting the Culture of Comparison' — A Textbook Drama Adaptation and Performance: The Case of 'Chen Taiqiu and the Friendship Journey'*

*moving target :*

Guide students to grasp the core concepts of 'integrity' and 'courtesy' in the story 'Chen Taiqiu and the Friend's Appointment', and extend this to the theme of 'rejecting comparisons'.

Through the adaptation and performance of textbook dramas, students can feel the value of "spiritual pursuit over material comparison" in role-playing.

Cultivate students' cooperative ability, innovative ability and language expression ability.

*Event flow:*

*Text Interpretation and Theme Extension (1 class hour)*

**Interpretation of "Chen Taiqiu and His Friend's Appointment":** Guide students to analyze the dialogue between Chen Taiqiu and his friend, helping them understand the importance of "integrity" and "courtesy". For example, the friend's "failure to show up" demonstrates dishonesty, while "insulting the father in front of the couple" shows rudeness. Yuan Fang's "not looking back when entering" reflects his defiance against such behavior.

**Extended Theme:** Building on the 'comparison culture' in classrooms, we explore the concept of 'refusing to compare.' Students analyze how 'integrity' and 'courtesy' in the story 'Chen Taiqiu and the Friend's Appointment' relate to this idea. This leads them to conclude that refusing to compare is a form of courtesy—respecting both others and oneself—by focusing on personal growth rather than material possessions.

*Adapted from the textbook (1 lesson hour)*

**Group Adaptation:** Divide students into 4-5 groups of 5-6 members. Each group should adapt the story "Chen Taiqiu and the Friend's Visit" under the theme of "Rejecting Materialism," adding a scene where "the friend's child boasts about material possessions, and Yuan Fang responds with 'virtue/capability'." For example, the adapted scene could be: "A friend brings his son over, and the boy

boasts, 'I have the latest toy car, do you?' Yuan Fang replies, 'Yesterday, I helped a classmate solve a difficult math problem, and the teacher praised me. That made me happier than any toy car.'

Teacher guidance: The teacher monitors each group's adaptation progress, providing feedback on 'theme alignment' and 'plot coherence'. For example, 'Your group's showing off stationery 'plot is excellent, but remember to match Yuan Fang's personality. His response should be well-reasoned and evidence-based, not just a simple rebuttal.'

*Textbook Drama Performance and Comment (1 class hour)*

Group performance: Each group takes turns to perform the adapted textbook drama on stage, while other students attentively watch and complete the 'Performance Evaluation Form', assessing aspects such as 'theme relevance', 'character portrayal', and 'plot innovation'.

Classroom Discussion: The teacher organized students to share reflections, starting with "post-viewing impressions" such as "I thought the third group's performance of Yuan Fang helping classmates solve problems and showing off 'was excellent—it taught me to appreciate strengths rather than material comparisons." The teacher then summarized, emphasizing the "theme-text integration," noting that "all groups successfully incorporated the rejecting comparisons 'theme into their adaptation of Chen Taiqiu and the Friendship Trip, 'maintaining the text's core message while connecting it to real-life situations, achieving the educational goal of 'nurturing through literature'."

Activity Impact: Through the process of adaptation and performance, students gained a deeper understanding of the theme "Rejecting Materialistic Competition". For instance, "When designing Yuanfang's response, we emphasized' spiritual virtues 'like reading and helping others over material possessions". The activity also enhanced collaborative skills and creativity. As one student noted, "Our group held multiple discussions to make the plot more engaging, ultimately deciding on the 'showing off toy cars' storyline". Following the activity, competitive behavior in the class significantly decreased. A student remarked, "Seeing Yuanfang not competing over material things, I no longer want to compare stationery with classmates."

### **Community-based Chinese language practice**

The community-engaged Chinese language program centers on 'community research' and 'recycled goods exchange,' taking students beyond school walls. Through community interactions, students experience the values of 'frugality' and 'humanistic care,' integrating language learning with social life while cultivating 'humanistic consumption' habits.

*Case Study Design 1: 'Anti-Consumerism' Stories in Communities: Research and Writing moving target :*

Guide students to visit the community, interview residents, and collect stories about 'frugality' and 'refusing blind consumption'. Organize the research results into articles to improve students' interviewing skills, writing skills and social observation skills. Through authentic community stories, students will deepen their anti-consumerism awareness and understand that thriftiness is a life wisdom.

*Event flow:*

*Activity preparation (1 class hour)*

Determine the research theme and subjects: The research theme is "Anti-consumerism stories in the community", and the research subjects are "old party members", "old shopkeepers", "retired teachers" in the community, etc., who often have a "frugal" attitude towards life.

Design interview outline: Teachers guide students to create an interview outline, including questions such as "How do you usually save in your daily life?", "Have you ever experienced 'refusing blind consumption'?", and "What do you think is the significance of thriftiness?"

Grouping and division of labor: divide students into 5-6 groups, 3-4 people in each group, and determine the roles of group leader, interviewer, recorder, photographer, etc., to ensure the orderly development of the research activities.

*Community research (one day weekend)*

Field Interviews: Students, accompanied by parents or guided by teachers, visit communities to conduct interviews with research subjects according to the interview outline, documenting content through text and photos. For example, when interviewing Grandpa Zhang, an elderly community Party member, he shared: "I usually wrap books with old newspapers. I mend worn clothes instead of buying new ones – it's not about money, but about avoiding waste. We all survived this way in the past. Now that conditions have improved, we shouldn't forget the old tradition of 'diligence and thrift'."

Data compilation: After the interviews, each team organized the materials and selected the most

representative anti-consumerism stories, such as “retired Party members wrapping books with old newspapers”, “time-honored store owners adhering to ‘thin profit but high sales’ without price hikes”, and “retired teachers crafting handicrafts from old clothes”.

*Writing and presentation of achievements (2 class hours)*

**Story Writing Assignment:** Students will work in groups to compile their interview materials into a story titled "Anti-Consumerism in the Community". The story must be authentic and vivid, emphasizing the theme of "frugality". Textbook excerpts may be appropriately referenced for commentary, such as: "Grandpa Zhang's practice of wrapping books in old newspapers reminds me of the 'Zhu Xi Family Instructions' saying: 'For every bowl of porridge and every grain of rice, remember their hard-won origins; for every thread and every fiber, always reflect on the difficulty of material resources.'"

**Achievements:** The stories written by each group were compiled into a 'Class Bulletin' and displayed on the classroom culture wall. Outstanding stories were selected for submission to the school magazine, enabling more students to learn about the 'anti-consumerism' stories in the community.

**Impact of the activity:** Through community research, students encountered authentic anti-consumerism cases, such as "When I saw Grandpa Zhang wrapping books with old newspapers, I realized that secondhand items can still serve significant purposes." During writing exercises, they integrated community stories with textbook content to deepen their understanding of "frugality." After the "class newsletter" exhibition, students from other classes flocked to view it, creating a positive ripple effect.

*Case Study Design 2: 'Reviving Old Treasures' Chinese Language Corner – Secondhand Book and Stationery Exchange Event*

*moving target :*

Encourage students to exchange unused books and stationery, emphasizing the "emotional value" and "practical value" of items rather than their "newness or age".

By writing "recommendation", students can improve their language expression and emotional expression. Cultivate students' "awareness of saving" and "spirit of sharing", and strengthen "humanistic consumption" behavior.

*Event flow:*

*Event preparation (1 week):*

**Item Collection:** Teachers notify students to organize idle books and stationery at home (clean and intact), with each item accompanied by a "Recommendation Card" containing "Item Name", "Reason for Recommendation (based on the item's usage experience or emotional value)", and "Type of Item to Exchange". For example, a student wrote a recommendation for a copy of "Journey to the West": "I've read this 'Journey to the West' three times, with my own annotations inside. Especially on the page about 'Sun Wukong's Three Battles with the White Bone Demon', I even drew a simple illustration. I hope classmates who enjoy 'Journey to the West' can exchange it with me. I'd like to exchange for a copy of <All Men Are Brothers>."

**Classroom setup:** Create a 'Second Life of Old Items' Chinese corner by organizing collected books and stationery into categories, each labeled with a 'Recommendation Card' to foster a warm and welcoming exchange atmosphere.

*Exchange Activity (1 class hour):*

**Free browsing:** Students freely explore the 'Chinese Corner' items, read the 'Recommendation' cards, and find items that interest them.

**Exchange and Sharing:** After students find items they wish to exchange, they communicate with the owner to confirm the exchange, then register it in the "Exchange Logbook". At the same time, students are encouraged to share their "reasons for exchange", such as "I want to exchange this book <All Men Are Brothers> with Xiao Ming because his recommendation says 'The scene where Lu Zhishen punches Zhen Guanxi is particularly exciting', and I've always wanted to read it".

**Emotional connection:** The teacher organizes a 'Story of My Old Items' sharing session, inviting 3-4 students to share their unused belongings "stories". For example, "This notebook was a birthday gift from my mom when I was in elementary school. Though I don't use it anymore, I hope classmates who like it will keep using it." This helps students appreciate the 'emotional value' of their items.

**Extended Activity:** Establish a sustainable 'Second Life of Old Items' Chinese Corner program, organizing monthly exchange events to encourage students to share unused items. Integrate these



exchanges with writing assignments, asking students to reflect on their experiences: 'I traded my old stationery for a copy of \*Old Tales from Southern City\*. Reading it felt profoundly meaningful because it was recommended by a classmate, and I could still see the marks of his reading.'

Event outcomes: The campaign collected 85 idle books and 120 stationery items, with 68 books and 95 stationery items successfully exchanged, achieving an exchange rate of over 75%. When sharing their "reasons for exchange," students frequently mentioned "sincere recommendations" and "being drawn to the stories behind the items," demonstrating their emphasis on "emotional value." Post-event feedback revealed that students vowed "we won't casually discard idle items anymore, but will give them a second life through exchanges," reinforcing their "awareness of conservation" and "sharing spirit."

### **Integrating Ideological and Political Education with Humanities to Elevate Educational Objectives**

By integrating ideological education with humanistic values, we combine elements like 'New Era Civic Ethics' and 'Red Culture' with the humanistic essence of Chinese language texts. This approach clarifies value orientations, strengthens students 'civic responsibilities and spiritual aspirations, elevates the humanistic education goals in addressing consumerism, and achieves coordinated development between' language education 'and' ideological education'.

### **Integrating "Citizen Ethics in the New Era" to Clarify the Duty of Rational Consumption**

The 'Implementation Outline for Moral Development of Citizens in the New Era' advocates 'promoting frugality and opposing extravagance,' which aligns closely with the traditional virtue of 'diligence and thrift' in Chinese literature. By integrating 'moral development for citizens in the new era' into Chinese language education, students can understand that 'rational consumption is not just a personal habit but also a civic responsibility,' thereby enhancing their awareness of responsible consumption.

*Teaching Case Study: Mencius 'Teachings on' Born in Adversity, Perish in Comfort 'and' The Civic Duty of Frugality'*

*instructional objectives:*

To comprehend the meaning of Mencius 'saying' adversity breeds success, comfort brings ruin 'and to recognize the importance of' being prepared for danger in times of peace and practicing frugality.' By applying the Implementation Guidelines for Moral Development in the New Era, we understand that thriftiness is a civic duty in this new era. Guide students to translate 'diligence and thrift' into concrete actions, fostering a civic consciousness of rational consumption.

*teaching process :*

*Text Interpretation (1 class hour):*

Reading and Understanding: Guide students to read aloud Mencius 'passage' Born in adversity, perish in comfort, 'and interpret the meaning of' Shun rose from the fields, Fu Yue emerged from the humblest of builders... Thus we understand that adversity breeds growth while comfort leads to ruin. 'Analyze how' adversity 'and' comfort' impact individuals and nations — individuals thrive through challenges, while nations decay in complacency.

Extended theme: Discuss the relationship between 'Born in adversity, perish in comfort' and 'frugality.' Guide students to conclude that frugality embodies 'being prepared for danger in times of peace.' Even in today's material abundance, we must avoid complacency and extravagance, lest we fall into the trap of' perishing in comfort.'

*Integration of Ideological and Political Education (1 class hour)*

The introduction of the 'Implementation Outline for Moral Development in the New Era' was followed by teachers explaining its principle of 'promoting thrift and opposing waste.' They also highlighted national initiatives like the 'Clean Plate Campaign' and the 'Anti-Food Waste Law,' helping students understand that 'thrift is not just a personal choice, but a civic duty upheld by the nation.'

Integrating Text and Ideological Education: Organize student discussions on "What common ground exists between Mencius 'Born in Adversity, Perish in Comfort' and the 'Frugality' principle in the Outline? How can junior high students in the new era fulfill civic responsibility for frugality?" Guide students to explore this through three dimensions: personal consumption, family life, and social engagement. Examples include avoiding blind competition in personal spending, conserving water and electricity at home, and practicing the 'Clean Plate Campaign' in community activities.

*Practice (After class):*

Assign the 'Frugality and Thrift' civic initiative, asking students to choose one action—such as 'adopting the clean plate campaign,' 'conserving water and electricity,' or 'making rational purchases of stationery'—and document their process and reflections.

Organize a 'Frugality and Thrift' initiative sharing session where students can share their experiences, such as 'This week I practiced the' clean plate 'policy at school cafeteria. Seeing less leftover food made me feel it was really meaningful,' to strengthen their sense of civic responsibility.

Educational Impact: Through integrating ideological education with text analysis, students have gained a deeper understanding of 'the civic duty of thrift and conservation.' For instance, one student remarked, 'I used to think saving was just my personal responsibility, but now I realize it's also a national initiative and our shared obligation. In the Thrift and Conservation Citizenship Action 'program, 90% of participants successfully completed at least one initiative. During a sharing session, they pledged, 'We will continue to uphold this responsibility and become accountable citizens.'

### **Strengthening the Value of Spiritual Pursuit Through "Red Text"**

The red texts embody the "hard struggle, selfless dedication, and spiritual supremacy" of the red spirit, as seen in works like "Red Star Over China" and "The Long March". The spirit in these texts stands in stark contrast to consumerism's "material supremacy". By using red texts for teaching, students can experience the "power of the red spirit" and strengthen their value recognition that "spiritual pursuit outweighs material enjoyment".

*Teaching Case Design — "The Spiritual Pursuit of Red Army Soldiers" and "Resisting Consumerism" in "Red Star Over China"*

*instructional objectives :*

Analyze the image of the Red Army soldiers in "Red Star Over China" and understand the red spirit of "hard work and spiritual supremacy". By contrasting the spiritual aspirations of Red Army soldiers with the material pursuits of consumerism, we reinforce the belief that spiritual values outweigh material comforts. Guide students to take the Red Army soldiers as an example and establish the value of "valuing spiritual growth".

*Teaching process :*

*Red text interpretation (1 class hour):*

Fragment Study: Select the passage "The Red Army Soldiers Crossing the Grasslands" from "Red Star Over China" and ask students to identify details that reflect the "hardship and perseverance" of the Red Army soldiers, such as "the soldiers eating grass roots and cooking leather belts, yet maintaining an optimistic attitude" and "in the harsh environment, the soldiers still persisted in studying and spreading revolutionary ideas."

Spiritual Analysis: Guide students to discuss 'Why did the Red Army soldiers persevere under such harsh conditions? What was their spiritual pursuit?' and help them distill the essence: 'Their spiritual pursuit — for the revolutionary ideal, fearless sacrifice, hard struggle, and valuing spiritual strength over material comforts.'

*Comparative analysis (1 class hour):*

Displaying consumerism: Show a video clip of junior high school students blindly chasing famous brands and internet-famous products, and ask students to analyze what the pursuit of consumerism is (material enjoyment, symbolic consumption).

Spiritual Red vs. Consumerism: Have students compare the 'spiritual aspirations of Red Army soldiers' with 'material pursuits of consumerism', complete a 'comparison chart', and analyze from dimensions such as 'pursuit goals', 'value orientation', and 'impact on individuals'.

*/ Comparison dimension / The spiritual pursuit of the Red Army soldiers / The material pursuit of consumerism /*

*/-----/-----/-----/-----/*

*/ Pursuit of goals / Revolutionary ideals, spiritual growth / Material enjoyment, symbolic consumption*

*/*

*/ Value orientation / Collective interests, hard work / Personal enjoyment, blind comparison /*

*/ Impact on individuals / Cultivate resilience and moral integrity / May lead to distorted values and psychological inferiority /*

Self-reflection: Have students reflect on the comparison results by asking themselves, 'Have I ever pursued materialistic consumption? What lessons can we learn from the Red Army soldiers' spiritual pursuits? For example, I once chased after trendy stationery, but now I realize it was



unnecessary. The Red Army soldiers persisted in learning despite hardships. I should learn from them and focus more on spiritual growth.'

#### *Spiritual inheritance (after class):*

Assign the 'Red Spirit Inheritance' project, requiring students to read a red-themed book (such as 'The Long March' or 'Little Soldier Zhang Ga') and write a reflection titled 'Red Spirit and My Consumption View,' using the red spirit to reflect on their own consumption habits.

A themed class meeting titled "Red Spirit and Youthful Growth" was organized, where students shared their reflections. For instance, one student remarked: "After reading 'The Long March,' I realized the Red Army soldiers were unafraid of hardships for their ideals. From now on, I won't blindly chase after luxury brands. I'll use my money to buy books and improve myself."

**Educational Impact:** Through interpreting and comparing red-themed texts, students gained profound insights into the "value of spiritual pursuits." For instance, they reflected on how "Red Army soldiers, despite lacking material comforts, possessed an indomitable spirit that outweighed any brand." In the "Inheriting the Red Spirit" assignment, students proactively examined their consumption habits and formulated plans for "rational consumption and spiritual growth," demonstrating how the red spirit positively shapes modern consumer values.

### **Practical Case References**

#### **Case Study: 'Family Affection vs. Materialism' in Teaching 'The Back View'**

##### *Case Background*

In a second-year junior high school classroom, some students struggled with "what to buy for Mom" on Mother's Day eve, believing "only expensive gifts could show love." Some even argued with parents over purchasing pricey presents. During the Chinese literature lesson studying "The Back View," the teacher decided to use this text as a platform for a "Family Love vs. Materialism" humanistic education, guiding students to understand that "the value of family love transcends material possessions."

##### *Teaching process*

**Textual Detail Analysis:** The teacher guides students to focus on the "father buying oranges" detail in "The Back View": "The father, being a stout man, naturally required more effort to walk. I saw him wearing a black cloth cap, a black cloth overcoat, and a dark blue cotton robe, shuffling toward the railway tracks. While it wasn't too difficult for him to slowly lean down, crossing the tracks and climbing onto the opposite platform proved challenging. He clung to the rail with both hands while pulling his feet upward, his plump body slightly leaning leftward, revealing his strenuous effort." Question: "The father's attire was simple, without designer clothing, and the oranges he bought weren't expensive fruit. Why does this scene become the most touching portrayal of familial affection?" After discussion, students concluded: "Because the father's actions were filled with love for his son—a love not measured by material possessions, but reflected in details like 'shuffling along' and 'struggling to climb'."

In a practical discussion on "real-life relevance," the teacher posed a question based on the context of "Mother's Day gift shopping": "Mother's Day is just around the corner, and many students are struggling with 'what to buy for Mom,' feeling that 'you can't show love without expensive gifts. 'Drawing from the father's love in 'The Back View,' do you think 'expressing family affection must involve costly material things?' " Students responded enthusiastically: "I don't think so. Just like the father expressed love through simple actions, we can show our love for Mom without spending money." "My mom always says she's happy as long as I study hard and listen to her – no need for gifts."

**Post-class activity:** Assign the 'Intangible Gratitude Project for Parents' as homework, asking students to design 1-2 material-independent gratitude initiatives inspired by 'The Back View'—such as reading excerpts from the story aloud, helping with household chores, or writing a heartfelt letter of thanks—while documenting their parents' reactions and personal reflections.

##### *Case Effect*

##### *Student feedback:*

85% of students chose non-material acts of gratitude, such as 'reading excerpts from The Back View to their parents' or 'helping with household chores.' For instance, student Xiao Li wrote in his homework: 'I read the passage about my father buying oranges from The Back View to my mother. She started crying as she listened, saying, 'You understand your father's love, and that makes me so happy.' It turns out that even without gifts, my mother can feel my love.'



*Parent feedback:*

Parents in the 'Home-School Communication Group' shared heartfelt messages like: 'This week, my child volunteered to wash dishes and said, "Mom, you've worked so hard!" —a moment that moved me more than any gift. 'Another parent noted, 'My child read "The Back View" to me and discussed the family bonds in the story, which has increased our communication. 'These stories highlight how the 'Intangible Gratitude Initiative' positively strengthens parent-child relationships.

*Subsequent effects:*

In their subsequent essays on 'family bonds,' students shifted from using 'buying gifts' as the primary way to express affection to focusing on intangible moments like 'reading books together with parents' and 'helping with household chores.' For instance, one student wrote, 'My mom doesn't like expensive gifts. What she treasures most is the time we spend reading Chinese textbooks together every evening,' demonstrating a proper understanding of the true value of family ties.

**Case Study of a Class Meeting on "The Analects and Modern Consumption"***Case Background*

In a first-year junior high school classroom, the phenomenon of "materialistic competition in stationery" has become increasingly prevalent. Some students obsessively pursue "imported stationery" and "internet-famous stationery" priced at dozens or even hundreds of yuan, while mocking classmates who use ordinary stationery. After consulting with the Chinese language teacher, the homeroom teacher decided to organize a themed class meeting titled "The Analects and Modern Consumption" using the classic text as material, aiming to guide students in developing rational consumption habits.

*Class Meeting Process**Interpretation of the Analects:*

The Chinese teacher leads the students to read the classic sentences in the Analects:

A gentleman does not seek fullness in food nor comfort in dwelling. He acts with diligence and speaks with caution, aligning himself with the righteous to correct his ways. This is what we call true learning. "Riches and honors gained through dishonest means are to me as fleeting as clouds." After explaining the meaning of the sentence, the teacher asked: "What does the Analects tell us about what a gentleman values more and what he does not value? What does this teach us about our consumption?" The student answered: "A gentleman values learning and morality, not material comforts. We should not blindly pursue expensive and famous things when we consume. We should pay attention to practicality and morality."

Modern Consumption Case Analysis: A Classroom Example of "Comparative Stationery" -Xiao Ming purchased a 50-yuan imported fountain pen but rarely used it, believing "it's a status symbol"; Xiao Hong mocked her desk mate for using a 10-yuan ordinary pen, saying "it's cheap and not practical." Organize group discussions: "Does Xiao Ming and Xiao Hong's consumption behavior align with the principles in The Analects? Why? How should we persuade them?" Each group selects a representative to speak, for example: "Xiao Ming's behavior doesn't match 'a gentleman doesn't seek fullness in food or comfort in dwelling.' He bought the pen for status rather than practicality. We could advise him: 'A good pen isn't necessarily expensive; what matters is its ability to aid learning.'"

"Rational Consumption" Slogan Design: Students work in groups to create slogans for "Rational Consumption", incorporating quotes from The Analects of Confucius, such as " 'Simple food and water isn't poverty—blind competition is emptiness" and "Wealth and status gained through dishonest means are like passing clouds; unnecessary consumption is futile—practicality and frugality are the real deal". After each group presents their slogans, the class votes to select the "Best Slogan", which is then posted on the classroom wall as part of the "Class Consumption Code".

*Case Effect**Changes in class atmosphere:*

After the class meeting, the 'materialistic competition' among students in the classroom has significantly decreased. When purchasing stationery, students now prioritize practical value, as seen in comments like, 'I bought a 15-yuan fountain pen—it's so handy, even better than those expensive ones. 'Mocking classmates for using basic stationery has virtually disappeared, replaced by friendly exchanges such as, 'Your stationery is really good—where did you buy it?'

*Student cognitive transformation:*

In their essay titled 'My Consumption Philosophy,' students frequently cited passages from the Analects to advocate for rational consumption. For instance, they quoted: "The Analects states, "A

gentleman does not seek fullness in food nor comfort in dwelling." I believe consumption should follow this principle—choosing what is right over what is expensive.' This demonstrates their comprehension and practical application of the Analects' humanistic principles.

*Long-term effects:*

The class established a 'Rational Consumption Code' that included the 'Best Slogan' campaign, featuring messages like 'Don't blindly chase branded stationery—focus on practicality and frugality' and 'Don't mock classmates using basic stationery—respect others' spending choices. 'Regular' Consumption Reflection' meetings were held to reinforce the concept of rational consumption.

**Notes**

**Avoiding "Serious" Teaching**

In junior high school Chinese education, when addressing consumerism and promoting humanistic values, educators should avoid didactic teaching methods. Rather than directly criticizing students' consumption behaviors, they should guide them to autonomously transform their perspectives through text-based resonance and self-reflection. Junior high students possess strong self-awareness and often resist rigid moral lectures. Directly condemning behaviors like "buying luxury brands" or "keeping up with peers" may provoke resentment and fail to achieve educational outcomes.

When addressing students "'blind purchase of trendy stationery," teachers should avoid direct criticism like "This is wrong and a waste of money." Instead, they can use texts like The Analects' "Frugality and Love for People" and Sun Shaoping's "No Material Comparisons" from The Ordinary World to guide students in self-reflection: "Is the high price of trendy stationery really worth it compared to regular stationery? Where does Sun Shaoping's happiness come from despite his poverty? Should our happiness stem more from spiritual experiences than material consumption?" Through this "text-guided + self-reflection" approach, students can actively recognize the flaws of "blind consumption" and achieve self-transformation.

Meanwhile, teachers should allow students to express "temporary confusion" or "different perspectives". For instance, when a student says, "I think branded stationery is just convenient, and I'm happy to buy it", teachers shouldn't dismiss their feelings but instead guide them: "Your preference for branded stationery reflects your personal experience. Now let's examine the saying 'Think of the effort behind every bowl of porridge and every grain of rice' from The Family Instructions of Master Zhu. Can we consider whether 'convenience' necessarily requires 'high price'? Are there more cost-effective alternatives?" Through patient guidance, students can gradually embrace humanistic values while avoiding one-size-fits-all moral lectures.

**Paying attention to individual differences**

Middle school students come from diverse family backgrounds and growing environments, resulting in varied perceptions and attitudes toward consumerism. Teachers should recognize these differences and employ tailored guidance approaches, avoiding a one-size-fits-all educational model. This ensures every student can develop a more balanced consumption mindset based on their individual circumstances.

For students from affluent families accustomed to "high consumption," teachers can guide them through "cases of frugality by celebrities" and "the spirit of hard struggle in red literature," avoiding resistance caused by "the denial of their consumption habits." For example, introducing cases such as "Qian Xuesen conducting research in cloth shoes" and "Premier Zhou Enlai living frugally with clothes patched over and over," combined with the hardships of Red Army soldiers in \*Red Star Over China\*, can lead students to reflect: "These celebrities and Red Army soldiers had the means to enjoy better material lives, yet why did they insist on frugality? This shows that 'true dignity' is not material luxury, but spiritual nobility." Through this approach, students can understand that "frugality" is not "the helplessness of poverty," but "a choice of spiritual pursuit," avoiding the perception that "teachers are denying their family conditions."

For students experiencing low self-esteem due to perceived "insufficient purchasing power," educators should emphasize "equality in spiritual values," helping them understand that "spiritual growth transcends material circumstances." For example, when teaching \*The Ordinary World\*, teachers can analyze Sun Shaoping's journey: "Despite poverty, he achieved spiritual growth through reading and earned respect." This narrative guides students: "Sun Shaoping lacked material comforts, yet through perseverance and spiritual pursuits, he became a respected individual. We all can achieve



spiritual growth through reading, learning, and helping others – it's not about material conditions." Meanwhile, language practice activities like "reading sharing sessions" and "treasure swap events" provide such students with more opportunities to showcase themselves. Through these "spiritual experiences," they gain confidence and overcome feelings of inferiority.

### **Linking families and society**

In junior high school Chinese teaching, the humanistic education against consumerism should not be limited to the classroom, but should also be linked with family and society, forming a collaborative education force of "school-family-society", so that students can continuously strengthen rational consumption and humanistic values in a comprehensive educational environment.

At the family level, teachers can build a bridge between home and school through "Chinese language practice assignments," enabling parents to participate in humanistic education. For example, assigning a "Family Frugality Story" writing task allows students and parents to jointly recall "stories of thrift in the family," such as "Grandma crafting handicrafts from old clothes" or "Dad repairing old appliances," then writing them into essays. Teachers may also recommend parents and students to co-read classic texts like "Zhu Xi's Family Instructions" and "The Analects," organizing "Family Reading Exchange Sessions" where parents can pass on the family virtue of "diligence and thrift" through shared reading. Meanwhile, educators can share "methods to address consumerism in Chinese language teaching" with parents via school-home communication groups, such as "how to guide children to rationally view brand names" and "how to cultivate children's spiritual pursuits through reading." This helps parents understand the school's educational direction and collaborate in educational activities.

At the societal level, teachers can utilize community resources and social public welfare activities to expand the space for Chinese language practice, allowing students to experience the value of "humanistic consumption" through social participation. For example, organizing students to participate in community "secondhand donation" activities, donating unused books and stationery to children in impoverished areas, and writing "donation diaries" to record their feelings; leading students to visit "red memorial halls" and combining texts such as "Red Star Over China" to feel the spirit of hard struggle of revolutionary predecessors, thereby reinforcing the "value of spiritual pursuit." Through practical activities at the societal level, students can transform the humanistic principles learned in class into concrete actions, deepening their rational understanding of consumerism through serving and understanding society.

### **Supplementary Information**

#### **Text Resource List**

#### **Traditional Cultural Text**

The Analects embodies core values such as 'diligence and frugality,' 'valuing righteousness over profit,' and 'spiritual pursuit.' Quotes like 'How virtuous is Hui! Even with a single basket of food and a single gourd of drink in a humble alley, where others cannot bear the worry, Hui remains undiminished in joy,' 'to use resources sparingly and to love others,' and 'wealth and honor gained through unjust means are to me like floating clouds' form the cornerstone of anti-consumerism humanistic education. The Zhu Xi Family Instructions emphasizes 'diligence and thrift' and 'cherishing resources,' as expressed in the sayings: 'For every bowl of porridge and every grain of rice, remember their hard-won origins; for every thread and every fiber, always reflect on the difficulty of material production.' It advises: 'Prepare in advance before the rain, don't dig a well when you're thirsty.' These teachings help students develop the mindset of 'rational consumption and proactive planning.'

The Records of the Grand Historian: Biographies of Guan Zhong and Yanzi recounts the frugal story of Yanzi, who "did not eat double portions of meat, nor did his concubines wear silk." When Yanzi served as Prime Minister of Qi, his charioteer's wife followed him from behind the door to observe her husband. The charioteer, dressed in a grand canopy and riding a four-horse carriage, appeared confident and self-satisfied. After returning home, his wife requested to leave. When asked why, she explained: "Yanzi was less than six feet tall yet became Prime Minister of Qi, renowned among the feudal lords. Now I see he is eight feet tall yet remains a humble charioteer. Yet you consider yourself sufficient. That is why I wish to leave." Later, the charioteer humbled himself. Yanzi, puzzled, questioned him, and the charioteer confessed the truth. Yanzi then recommended him as a high-ranking official. This contrast between Yanzi's frugality and the charioteer's "self-satisfaction" helps students understand that "frugality is a virtue, not a disgrace."



Liu Yuxi's 'Inscription of a Humble Abode' embodies the humanistic ethos of 'Though modest, it is my virtue that makes it fragrant, 'emphasizing that spiritual fulfillment outweighs material luxury. This concept serves as a counterpoint to the 'luxury lifestyle 'narrative, guiding students to redefine the essence of a 'quality life.'

### **Contemporary Texts**

"Ordinary World" (by Lu Yao) portrays Sun Shaoping, the protagonist, who persists in his studies and spiritual growth amidst poverty. "He yearns for spiritual enrichment rather than material satisfaction," serving as a classic example of "spiritual pursuit outweighing material enjoyment," contrasting sharply with consumerism's "material supremacy."

The Tree-Planting Shepherd (Jean-Jacques Annaud): A shepherd transformed a barren plateau into an oasis through decades of perseverance. His minimalist lifestyle, free from material pursuits, found fulfillment in 'creating life' —a story that teaches students about the value of 'minimalist living and spiritual creation.'

"Old Wang" (Yang Jiang): This narrative chronicle the story of Old Wang, who "lived in poverty yet remained kind and sincere." "Old Wang had only one eye—the other being a 'snail eye,' which made him blind. Passengers avoided his vehicle, fearing he might not see clearly and cause accidents. Some speculated that this old bachelor had likely suffered from some serious illness in his youth, resulting in the loss of his sight. Even his remaining eye was impaired, becoming blind in the dark. Once, he crashed into a utility pole, leaving half his face swollen and bruised. At that time, we were in a labor school. My daughter diagnosed him with night blindness and fed him a large bottle of cod liver oil, which restored his night vision. Whether his blindness stemmed from childhood malnutrition or a severe illness, both were misfortunes, though the latter was undoubtedly more profound." Old Wang's "simple interactions" and "kindness" exemplify how "the beauty of human nature surpasses material beauty," serving as a lesson for students to value "the spiritual significance in interpersonal relationships."

"Back View" (by Zhu Ziqing) portrays a simple scene of the author's father buying tangerines in a black robe and dark blue cotton coat, demonstrating that "family bonds transcend material possessions." This vivid depiction helps students grasp the intangible nature of emotional values.

Camel Xiangzi (Lao She): Obsessed with the material goal of 'buying his own car,' Xiangzi ultimately suffers a mental breakdown. This contrasts with Sun Shaoping, prompting students to reflect on the balance between material goals and spiritual aspirations.

### **Policy and theoretical references**

The Implementation Outline for Moral Development of Citizens in the New Era explicitly advocates 'promoting frugality and opposing extravagance' and 'cultivating and practicing core socialist values.' These principles provide a policy foundation for addressing consumerism and advancing humanistic education in Chinese language instruction. By integrating these values into text analysis, students can better understand the civic duty of thrift.

Marx's "Commodity Fetishism" Theory: In \*Das Kapital\*, Marx observed that "the commodity form transforms the social character of human labor into the material nature of its products, projecting the inherent social attributes of these objects. This process converts the social relations of producers into external social relations between commodities." Essentially, commodities are imbued with "mystical attributes" beyond their use value, causing people to worship commodities instead of focusing on human essence and spiritual values. This theory helps analyze the essence of consumerism and assists students in rationally understanding the "symbolic value" of commodities.

Nell Noddings' "Care Ethics" and "Frugality Advocacy": In her book \*Learning to Care: Another Model for Education\*, Nell Noddings argues that education should cultivate the ability to "care for others, society, and nature." She emphasizes that "frugality" is a key manifestation of care ethics, as it embodies "valuing resources, caring for others (especially the underprivileged), and protecting the natural environment." This theory helps students understand that "frugality is not just a personal habit, but a form of care for others, society, and nature."

Constructivist learning theory, represented by scholars like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, posits that learning is a process where learners actively construct meaning within specific contexts to acquire knowledge. This theory provides theoretical support for approaches in language education such as "text interpretation," "writing practice," and "language activities," emphasizing that through "contextual creation," "active participation," and "meaning construction," students can autonomously develop

understanding and values regarding "anti-consumerism."

## CONCLUSION

In an era where consumerist culture profoundly shapes the values of junior high school students, Chinese language education has emerged as a vital platform for countering consumerism and fostering humanistic education through its rich collection of classical texts and diverse teaching approaches. This study identifies the negative impacts of consumerism on students and the strengths of Chinese language instruction through theoretical analysis. By exploring core implementation pathways, it establishes a four-pronged humanistic education model: "textual interpretation integration," "writing practice guidance," "language activity engagement," and "integration of ideological-political education with humanities." Supported by concrete teaching case designs and analyses, the paper provides actionable implementation strategies. Practical guidelines and supplementary resources further ensure effective classroom application.

In middle school Chinese education, addressing consumerism through humanistic education should not be reduced to mere "opposition to consumption," but rather guide students to "practicing rational consumption and valuing spiritual enrichment," fostering a mindset where "spiritual values outweigh material comforts." This process requires teachers to use classic texts as vehicles, centering instruction around students through "immersive guidance," "self-reflection," and "practical experiences," enabling them to actively develop healthy consumption perspectives and values. Simultaneously, it necessitates collaboration between families and society to create a synergistic educational ecosystem. Through this comprehensive approach, students can continuously strengthen their humanistic literacy, break free from consumerist constraints, and achieve holistic spiritual growth. Moving forward, we must further explore deeper integration pathways between Chinese language education and consumerism. This includes developing anti-consumerism-focused school-based Chinese curriculum and implementing interdisciplinary collaboration (Chinese with Ethics and Law, History) to continuously refine humanistic education models. These efforts will enable junior high school Chinese courses to play a more significant role in addressing consumerism and cultivating 'holistically developed individuals'.

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