

Name:	Date Issued: Date Due:	Period:	Assignment: Close Read Point Value =
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**Instructions:** Highlight and take notes on the text below and how it connects to the Compelling and Supporting Questions. Use the text to answer the question “How should a government treat its people?”

**Background:** Close reading is thoughtful, critical analysis of a text that focuses on significant details or patterns in order to develop a deep, precise understanding of the text’s form, craft, meanings, etc. It is a key requirement of the Common Core State Standards and directs the reader’s attention to the text itself.

Steps:			
1. Read the entire document.	2. Underline the Supporting Details.	3. Place a STAR by the Main Idea.	4. Summarize any notes on the right-side margin.
Things to Consider...	A: What is the author’s purpose?	B: What text features were used?	C: What is the tone?

Article Title: “Background Information on Daoism”	Notes/Vocabulary:
<p>1. Daoism is a belief system based largely on the writings of a Chinese wise person, or <i>sage</i>, named Laozi (pronounced LAU-ZUH). Scholars know so little about Laozi’s life that some people believe he is only a legendary figure. However, many scholars believe that Laozi was born in the late sixth century B.C.E., and kept records in the court of the Zhou (pronounced JOE) empire. Laozi believed that striving for power and wealth was harmful because it was unnatural. He wrote down his ideas, which people later collected in a book called <i>Daodejing</i>, or “The Way and Its Power.”</p> <p>2. Daoism is a philosophy that teaches that people can gain peace and happiness by becoming one with the Dao, or the Way. The Dao is a universal force connected to nature that creates order for all things. Daoism teaches that people should see themselves as part of nature, and lead a balanced life in harmony with it. Laozi believed that for people to discover how to behave, they should notice how nothing in nature strives for fame, power, or knowledge. Instead, nature accepts what comes its way, like a piece of grass that bends when the breeze blows. True harmony comes from balancing the opposite forces of nature, called yin and yang. Laozi taught that it is impossible to have good without bad., beauty without ugliness, or pleasure without pain. Because Daoists see good and bad as connected, they try to accept both.</p> <p>3. Laozi taught rulers to make fewer laws. He called the way of ruling <i>wuwei</i> (pronounced WOO-WAY), or "action through non-action." Rather than attempting to take control and guide the people, a ruler should take very little action and only support the people in achieving what they naturally desire. Just as a farmer cannot force a plant to grow, Laozi thought that a ruler cannot force the people to prosper.</p>	

<p>4. During the Han dynasty, from 206 B.C.E. to 220 c.E., Confucianism became the official state belief system. However, Han rulers also adopted some Daoist principles. For example, they made fewer laws and fought fewer wars, believing that laws and wars do not naturally strengthen society. One emperor followed Daoist advice and eliminated a heavy land tax on poor farmers. For a time, this policy helped ease the hunger of poor people.</p>	
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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

<p>1. Who was Laozi? (Also interpreted as Lao-Tzu)</p>
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<p>2. According to Laozi, why should people not strive for power and wealth?</p>
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<p>3. What is the Dao?</p>
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<p>4. According to Daoists, how can people gain peace and happiness?</p>
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<p>5. Why do Daoists try to accept all things that occur?</p>
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<p>6. How did Laozi believe rulers should govern?</p>
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<p>7. In what ways did Han laws reflect Daoism?</p>
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