



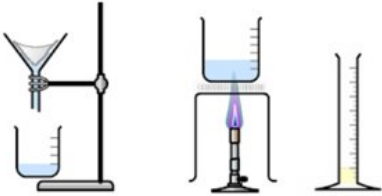
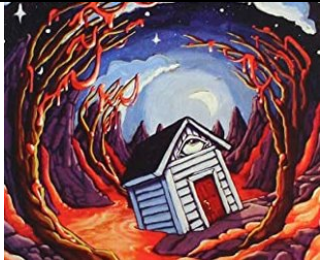




May Tang – A New Australian by Katrina Beikoff

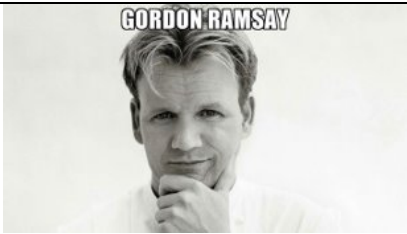






WEEK THREE: THE IMPORTANT NEWS

Read Chapters 4-6, then complete the following questions:

1. May is told some big news at the beginning of Chapter 4. What is this big news and what has caused this to happen? To support your answer, use the link below to research the big event and provide evidence as to why May has these changes occurring.
<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Tiananmen-Square-incident/609276>
2. At the beginning of Chapter 5, how do you think May is feeling? What evidence from the book tells you this?
3. May's mother shares a story with May about a young girl during the cultural revolution. Research about the cultural revolution and in your own words, summarise what the cultural revolution was about.
4. On pages 38 – 43, the story of the smart young girl being sent away to work in the rice fields is told to May by her Mother. What connection can you make with this story and what May is about to go through in her life? What evidence from the story can you use to support your answer.
5. If you were speaking to May about moving to Australia, what information and facts could you tell her in order to help her with the move?
6. On page 49, Chapter 6, Ye Ye shares one of his wise sayings;
"It is important to know where special things come from," said Ye Ye, after scratching his head and pondering my secret a bit more, 'and to know why they come. Always remember, if the wind comes from an empty cave, it's not without cause.'
In your opinion, what do you think this means and why?

VOCABULARY – Week Three

mourn		When they refused, soldiers came in with their boots and batons to break up the crowd. pg.28
batons		'Your big brother is going to apply for asylum to stay in Australia.' pg. 29
cannons		Ye Ye nodded that I could accompany him to the park and gestured to Mei Li, which meant I was allowed to pick up her cage. pg.47
criticised		Army tanks rolled in with their giant caterpillar wheels and long nose cannons. pg.28
asylum		There was the clack of pots on the stove, which meant that Muma was making paofan. pg.32
distressed		I clenched my eyes shut pg.32
clench		I heard the final clatter of Jie Jie's hair apparatus. pg.33
clack		But there was going to be a crackdown on all the people who had criticised the government and wanted change. pg.29

apparatus	 A black and white photograph of Gordon Ramsay, looking directly at the camera with his hand resting on his chin.	I was in limbo – unsure whether I had to worry about what would happen if we stay, or panic about my uncertain future if we left. pg.44
limbo	 A photograph of a young boy with dark, curly hair, looking off to the side with a serious expression.	When Hu died, millions of people gathered all over China to mourn. pg.27
turmoil	 A photograph of a baby's face peeking over a dark horizontal barrier.	I asked, feeling more distressed and getting close to tears. pg.31
apprehension	 A painting depicting a chaotic battle scene with soldiers and a large, dark, swirling mass.	Said Ye Ye, after scratching his head and pondering my secret a pit more. pg.49
curiosity	 A cartoon illustration of three children playing a game of tag or hide-and-seek. One boy is running, another is standing, and a girl is holding a stick.	It was obviously his fault that enormous turmoil had struck my life. pg.46
gestured	 A photograph of several large, green, antique cannons displayed in a park-like setting with buildings in the background.	I felt the ink marked envelope again in my pocket and I tingled with a mix of apprehension and curiosity. pg. 47
pondering	 A photograph of a clenched fist, showing the hand and fingers tightly curled.	I felt the ink marked envelope again in my pocket and I tingled with a mix of apprehension and curiosity. pg. 47

Week 2 – Tiananmen Square

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Tiananmen-Square-incident/609276>

The Tiananmen Square incident refers to a series of protests and demonstrations in China in the spring of 1989 that culminated on the night of June 3–4 with a government crackdown on the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in [Beijing](#). Although the demonstrations and their subsequent repression occurred in cities throughout the country, the events in Beijing—and especially in [Tiananmen Square](#), historically linked to such other protests as the [May Fourth Movement](#) (1919)—came to symbolize the entire incident.

Emergence and Spread of unrest

By the spring of 1989 there was growing sentiment among university students and others in China for political and economic reform. The country had experienced a decade of remarkable economic growth and liberalization, and many Chinese had been exposed to foreign ideas and standards of living. In addition, although the economic advances in [China](#) had brought new prosperity to many citizens, it was accompanied by price inflation and opportunities for corruption by government officials. In the mid-1980s the central government had encouraged some people (notably scientists and intellectuals) to assume a more active political role, but student-led demonstrations calling for more individual rights and freedoms in late 1986 and early 1987 caused hard-liners in the government and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to suppress what they termed “bourgeois liberalism.” One casualty of this tougher stance was [Hu Yaobang](#), who had been the CCP general secretary since 1980 and who had encouraged democratic reforms; in January 1987 he was forced to resign his post.

The catalyst for the chain of events in the spring of 1989 was the death of Hu in mid-April; Hu was transformed into a [martyr](#) for the cause of political liberalization. On the day of his funeral (April 22), tens of thousands of students gathered in Tiananmen Square demanding democratic and other reforms. For the next several weeks, students in crowds of varying sizes—eventually joined by a wide variety of individuals seeking political, social, and economic reforms—gathered in the square. The initial government response was to issue stern warnings but take no action against the mounting crowds in the square. Similar demonstrations rose up in a number of other Chinese cities, notably [Shanghai](#), [Nanjing](#), Xi'an, Changsha, and Chengdu. However, the main outside media coverage was in Beijing, in part because a large number of Western journalists had gathered there to report on the visit to China by Soviet leader [Mikhail Gorbachev](#) in mid-May. Shortly after his arrival, a demonstration in Tiananmen Square drew some one million participants and was broadcast widely overseas.

Meanwhile, an intense debate ensued among Chinese government and party officials on how to handle the mounting protests. Moderates, such as [Zhao Ziyang](#) (Hu Yaobang's successor as party general secretary), advocated negotiating with the demonstrators and offering concessions. However, they were overruled by hard-liners led by Chinese premier [Li Peng](#) and supported by paramount elder statesman [Deng Xiaoping](#), who—fearing anarchy—insisted on forcibly suppressing the protests.

During the last two weeks of May, [martial law](#) was declared in Beijing, and army troops were stationed around the city. However, an attempt by the troops to reach Tiananmen Square was thwarted when Beijing citizens flooded the streets and blocked their way. Protesters remained in large numbers in Tiananmen Square, centering themselves around a plaster statue called “Goddess of Democracy,” near the northern end of the square. Western journalists also maintained a presence there, often providing live coverage of the events.

Crackdown and Aftermath

By the beginning of June, the Chinese government was ready to act again. On the night of June 3–4, tanks and heavily armed troops advanced toward Tiananmen Square, opening fire on or crushing those who again tried to block their way. Once the soldiers reached the square, a number of the few thousand remaining demonstrators there chose to leave rather than face a continuation of the confrontation. By morning the area had been cleared of protesters, though sporadic shootings occurred throughout the day. The military also moved in forcibly against protesters in several other Chinese cities, including Chengdu, but in Shanghai the mayor, [Zhu Rongji](#) (later to become the premier of China), was able to negotiate a peaceful settlement. By

June 5 the military had secured complete control, though during the day there was a notable, widely reported incident involving a lone protester momentarily facing down a column of tanks as it advanced on him near the square.

In the aftermath of the crackdown, the United States instituted economic and diplomatic sanctions for a time, and many other foreign governments criticized China's handling of the protesters. The Western media quickly labeled the events of June 3–4 a "massacre." The Chinese government arrested thousands of suspected dissidents; many of them received prison sentences of varying lengths of time, and a number were executed. However, several dissident leaders managed to escape from China and sought refuge in the West, notably Wu'er Kaixi. The disgraced Zhao Ziyang was soon replaced as party general secretary by [Jiang Zemin](#) and was put under house arrest.

From the outset of the incident, the Chinese government's official stance was to downplay its significance, labeling the protesters "counterrevolutionaries" and minimizing the extent of the military's actions on June 3–4. The government's count of those killed was 241 (including soldiers), with some 7,000 wounded; most other estimates have put the death toll much higher. In the years since the incident, the government generally has attempted to suppress references to it. Public commemoration of the incident is officially banned in China. However, the residents of [Hong Kong](#) have held an annual vigil on the anniversary of the crackdown, even after Hong Kong reverted to Chinese administration.



Cultural Revolution – China

The Cultural Revolution was launched in China in 1966 by Communist leader Mao Zedong in order to reassert his authority over the Chinese government. Believing that current Communist leaders were taking the party, and China itself, in the wrong direction, Mao called on the nation's youth to purge the "impure" elements of Chinese society and revive the revolutionary spirit that had led to victory in the civil war 20 years earlier and the formation of the People's Republic of China. The Cultural Revolution continued in various phases until Mao's death in 1976, and its tormented and violent legacy would resonate in Chinese politics and society for decades to come.

How it began

In the 1960s, Chinese Communist Party leader [Mao Zedong](#) came to feel that the current party leadership in China, as in the [Soviet Union](#), was moving too far in a revisionist direction, with an emphasis on expertise rather than on ideological purity. Mao's own position in government had weakened after the failure of his "[Great Leap Forward](#)" (1958-60) and the economic crisis that followed. Chairman Mao Zedong gathered a group of radicals, including his wife Jiang Qing and defense minister Lin Biao, to help him attack current party leadership and reassert his authority.

Mao launched the so-called Cultural Revolution (known in full as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution) in August 1966, at a meeting of the Plenum of the Central Committee. He shut down the nation's schools, calling for a massive youth mobilization to take current party leaders to task for their embrace of bourgeois values and lack of revolutionary spirit. In the months that followed, the movement escalated quickly as the students formed paramilitary groups called the Red Guards and attacked and harassed members of China's elderly and intellectual population. A personality cult quickly sprang up around Mao, similar to that which existed for [Josef Stalin](#), with different factions of the movement claiming the true interpretation of Maoist thought. The population was urged to rid itself of the "Four Olds": Old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas.

How it ends

Zhou acted to stabilize China by reviving educational system and restoring numerous former officials to power. In 1972, however, Mao suffered a stroke; in the same year, Zhou learned he had cancer. The two leaders threw their support to [Deng Xiaoping](#) (who had been purged during the first phase of the Cultural Revolution), a development opposed by the more radical Jiang and her allies, who became known as the Gang of Four. In the next several years, Chinese politics teetered between the two sides. The radicals finally convinced Mao to purge Deng in April 1976, a few months after Zhou's death, but after [Mao died](#) that September, a civil, police and military coalition pushed the Gang of Four out. Deng regained power in 1977 and would maintain control over Chinese government for the next 20 years.

Long term effects

Some 1.5 million people were killed during the Cultural Revolution, and millions of others suffered imprisonment, seizure of property, torture or general humiliation. The Cultural Revolution's short-term effects may have been felt mainly in China's cities, but its long-term effects would impact the entire country for decades to come. Mao's large-scale attack on the party and system he had created would eventually produce a result opposite to what he intended, leading many Chinese to lose faith in their government altogether.