Objectives:

- Students will be exposed to a series of children’s games...
- Students will reflect upon the ways that physical activities, games, and foods have deeper cultural meanings and implications.
- Students will deepen their understanding of Chinese culture through discussion of games, physical activity, and food in China. Students may also reconstruct some of their assumptions about Chinese culture and the meaning of games, foods, and health.
- Students will compare and contrast American and Chinese Culture through comparing and contrasting American and Chinese games and concepts of physical fitness, wellness, and nutrition.
- Students will use new knowledge to form a person, lifelong fitness program and may cultivate a deeper interest in physical fitness and health in all cultures.

Description of Module:
Enhance module so that it provides more than a "glimpse" inside Asia. The module will use games, physical activity, and foods to better understand Chinese (and/or Japanese) constructs of physical fitness, wellness, stress management and mental illness, weight control, nutrition, and diet. The module can then be taken even further through reflective essays where students explore how a game, activity, or food custom has deeper sociocultural meaning.

Note: During reflections and activities, students should also be prompted to ask others (politely) to defend their statements on American and Chinese culture. Students should find themselves on an investigative and curious path to enhance their understanding of both cultures. It is not necessary that students or the instructor should have answers to the questions below, rather the point of the questions is to prompt further inquiry and have students answer (or contribute cultural knowledge) many of the questions below in their reflective essays.

Students should plan to keep their note cards, notes, and reflections during these activities to help them with their final paper.

Methodology:

Day One - Before or after a brief overview of physical fitness endeavors in Asia, student complete a short reflective activity where they respond (with their own thoughts and opinions) to a number of questions about Chinese games, lifestyle, food, and culture. This activity is designed to help students reflect on how they have already come to see or view Chinese culture and the meanings of certain cultural practices. In day one and throughout the module, as students learn about Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Badminton as well as Fangboa and Chegi, they should be prompted to think more deeply about what they might learn about the culture as a whole through these games: who plays them? Are they games of a certain class? Are they games of a certain gender? Are they games of a certain region? Do they have religious or spiritual backgrounds? What specific skills do they require? What might these skills say about the values of a culture: strength, intellect, creativity, speed, agility, tranquility, inner peace? Are these individual activities or group activities? What are the rules? What might we interpret the rules to mean about work patterns and decision making on a larger cultural level?

Day Two - Students will play the games in 10-12 minutes and reflect on the prompted questions above. Extending the skill related components of the games into questions and reflections may help them redefine their own perceptions of Chinese cultural views of the body, wellness, and fitness. The group could also have a 10-20 minute discussion on comparing the fundamentals of these games and activities to American games and sports. Again, connecting American games and rules to deeper implications on the values of our culture. Where do the students see similarities? Where do they see differences? What do they think the root of these similarities and differences are? During the game playing and reflection, students might come closer to a deeper part of Chinese culture that they would like to explore in their reflective papers. They should be thinking of this and have a place to write down anything that has piqued their interest.

Day Three and Four - Students will be provided a lecture on a typical Asian diet. The class could begin with the following activities: on a note card students have about five minutes to write down what they think the typical American diet is. This should be followed by sharing and a discussion of what is "typical". This understanding that
Discussion of meal customs and diet can also be extended to ask deeper questions about a culture: What are some ideas in Chinese culture about the relationship of the body and mind to food? Do many people in Asia view the body and anatomy the same as in the US? Historically, Chinese culture has a different view and take on the human anatomy. A supplemental lesson or segment on historical Chinese medicine and anatomy might be very beneficial (five elemental qualities and their relationship to the human body and the human experience). How might food and historical views of the body and traditional medicine help us understand or more clearly investigate Chinese culture in terms of notions of concepts of beauty, concepts of health, concepts of sickness and wellness, concepts of disease, meal customs, and so on. Again comparing with American lifestyle and American culture concepts is very beneficial.

Also a look at agriculture and the types of food grown or available in different regions and how food production has changed throughout time could enhance the lesson and provide separate inquiry into issues such as food costs, food scarcity, and production.

Day Five and Six
As with previous days, the introduction into Tai Chi should also be one of making deeper connections about cultural concepts of competition, strength and physical fitness, and concepts of "self" and mental health. Again a five minute reflective activity on what causes stress our lives can open the class to a discussion on whether they think that people in China have stress caused by similar things, if they think people experience stress the same, or to begin questioning what defines and causes stress in Chinese culture. Students can then consider other mental health topics as well as compare and contrast stress reducing activities in the US and China.

Reflective paper:
Students should use their notes to write a reflective paper about a certain game, physical activity, food, or food custom and its connection to Chinese culture and vice versa. Students should be prompted to explore one element of culture such that the paper has some parameters. Topic could be: Tai Chi and meanings of mental health in China; Tai Chi and definitions of stress in China; sports and socioeconomic status in China.

Students could also be encouraged to share their papers through short presentations and then work together as a class to compile "new views of Chinese culture." Students should then go back to their original reflective assignment and fill post-module boxes and examine how their answers and perceptions have changed.