

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, April 7, 2017

Print Replica Date: Monday, April 3, 2017

Article Title: China using facial recognition to limit toilet-paper use

Section: MAIN, A7

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Students will examine different cultural norms in China in regards to bathroom cleanliness.
- ✓ Students will discuss if facial recognition software is the best solution.
- ✓ Students will think about limiting the use of toilet paper in public restrooms.

CCSS Standards

Social Studies EALR 1: Civics

The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.

Social Studies EALR 3: Geography

Understands the cultural universals of place, time, family life, economics, communication, arts, recreation, food, clothing, shelter, transportation, government, and education.

Social Studies EALR 4: History

- Analyzes the motives and interests behind an interpretation of a recent event.

Social Studies EALR 5: Social Studies

- Analyzes consequences of positions on an issue or event.
- Analyzes the short-term and long-term implications of decisions affecting the global community.

Vocabulary

Look up the definition for **era**. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

Today in China, people are highly enthusiastic about tourism, and we have entered a new **era** of public tourism," said Zhan Dongmei, a researcher with the China Tourism Academy. "The expectation of the public for the toilet is becoming higher."

era definition:

New Sentence:

Civic Minds Activity: Take a moment to review today's print replica of *The Seattle Times*. Can you find a story that stands out to you regarding a global issue or someone that was inspired to help others?

Pre-Reading Questions



- What do you see in this picture?
- Where are these women?
- What is one of the women holding?
- What are the feelings/emotions in this photo?
- What do you think the article will be about?
- Do you take toilet paper for granted? Why or why not?
- Do you have any rules on toilet paper usage in your own home?

Comprehension Questions:

1. Fed up with the theft of toilet paper from public bathrooms, tourist authorities in China's capital have begun using facial-recognition technology to do what?
2. The unusual move — part of a “toilet revolution” — is another step in China's vast upgrading of what?
3. What is the special focus of this campaign?
4. At Beijing's 600-year-old Temple of Heaven, administrators recognized the need to stock the public bathrooms with toilet paper, a requirement for obtaining a top rating from the National Tourism Authority. But they needed a means of preventing patrons from stripping them bare for personal use — hence the introduction of new technology that dispenses how much toilet paper, every nine minutes after a face scan?
5. Launched two years ago, the revolution calls for at least 34,000 new public bathrooms to be constructed in Beijing and 23,000 renovated by the end of this year. Authorities are also encouraging the installation of Western-style sit-down commodes rather than the more common squat toilets. Around \$_____ billion has already been spent on the program, according to the National Tourism Administration.
6. What are their 3 ultimate targets?

Class Discussion Questions or Journal/Essay Prompts:

- How important are clean toilets in a public establishment?
- Do you see the importance of China's new campaign for upgraded restrooms?
- How do you feel about the facial recognition scanners in bathrooms when people need toilet paper? Is this necessary?
- Do you think this is a good idea?
- A cost on these machines wasn't stated in the article, but do you think they cost more than the toilet paper on a yearly basis? Why or why not?
- Do you ever see a program like this being implemented in the United States? Why or why not?
- Why is it so important to keep bathrooms clean?

“Today in China, people are highly enthusiastic about tourism, and we have entered a new era of public tourism,” said Zhan Dongmei, a researcher with the China Tourism Academy. “The expectation of the public for the toilet is becoming higher.”

“People take away the paper mostly because they are worried they can't find any when they want to use it the next time. But if we can provide it in every toilet, most people will not do it anymore,” Zhan said.

- Do you agree with Zhan's statement? Why or why not?

At Happy Valley, the largest amusement park in Beijing, around 4 million annual visitors rely on 18 bathrooms, each of which is assigned one or two cleaners who must make their rounds every 10 minutes on busy days.

“People come here to have fun, but if the toilets are disgusting, how can they have a good time here?” said Vice General Manager Li Xiangyang. “It is the least we should do to offer a clean and tidy environment for tourists to enjoy both the tour of the park and the experience of using our toilets.”

- Were you surprised to find out that China's largest amusement park only has 18 bathrooms? Why or why not?
- Do you agree that clean bathroom facilities are important in all public places? Why or why not?

Civic Minds in The Seattle Times is posted to the Web on Friday. Please share the NIE program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica version of the newspaper please call 206/652-6290 or toll-free at 1-888/775-2655.

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