**Grade School during the Chinese Cultural Revolution:**

*The following is an excerpt from "*[*After the Cultural Revolution*](https://worldview.carnegiecouncil.org/archive/worldview/1973/01/2138.html/_res/id=File1/)*" written by Paul E. Sigmund in January 1973 for* WORLDVIEW *Magazine*. *The Chinese Cultural Revolution saw a rapid restructuring of social, political, and educational institutions so that they were completely devoted to Maoist ideology. According to the excerpt, indoctrination started as early as three years old and continued throughout grade school, encompassing much of the humanities curriculum.*

*The title of this article is somewhat deceiving, as historians place the Chinese Cultural Revolution from 1966 until Mao's death in 1976. However, Mao declared that it was officially finished in 1969, and the author at the time was operating under this notion.*

*Sigmund was a professor of politics at Princeton. He accompanied a delegation from the U.S. House of Representatives to China.* WORLDVIEW Magazine ran from 1958-85 and featured articles by political philosophers, scholars, churchmen, statesmen, and writers from across the political spectrum. The following excerpt has been modified for the classroom.

[T]he kindergarten [is] for children aged three to seven, and already at this point a high degree of ideological content appears in the school. Children are often taught songs glorifying Chairman Mao, they learn Mandarin, the national language, in areas where it is not the mother tongue (including most of southern China, where Cantonese is spoken). Dances and plays emphasize the defense of the country against foreign aggressors (there is no inhibition against militaristic toys), and the cultural life of ethnic minorities such as the Tibetans and Mongolians is praised but assumed to be integrated into a unified China. The ubiquitous pictures of Mao Tse-tung hang in each classroom, and children are trained to help each other and to "serve the people..."

Classroom work in secondary school is also structured around the cult of Mao. Mao's picture hung in front of every classroom. (Portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin appeared on the back wall.) Art classes sketched scenes from the Peking Revolutionary Opera, music classes sang songs of the People's Liberation Army, and English classes studied the works of Mao in translation.... About 70 percent of the students wore the red armbands of the Red Guards and 10 per cent were said to belong to the Communist Youth League...Classes were held from 8 A.M. until 4:30 P.M. and included two hours a week of political education and several hours of physical training.

...It is impossible to say at this early date, from the limited opportunity which outsiders have had for observation, what effect the new educational structure will have upon creativity and the innovative capacity of China or whether it can maintain the desired revolutionary élan for the indefinite future. (The Chinese already speak of the necessity of new cultural revolutions "in a different form" in the not too distant future.) Thus far, however, the new system appears to be successful in preventing the establishment of the intellectual and bureaucratic elite, the emergence of which Mao feared before he unleashed the Red Guards in 1966.