

The Little Red Book: Shaping Culture

Introduction: The Little Red Book, more properly known as ‘The Quotations of Mao Zedong’, is the world’s second most published book. It’s estimated that around 900 million copies have been printed. Only the Bible has been printed more, and it had a head start of almost 2000 years.

The Little Red book is a collection of quotations from Mao Zedong. The quotations are divided into the 33 sections of life to which they apply with sections on discipline, patriotism, and the role of women.

Directions: Write a series of quotations commenting on aspects of life and culture in the United States. Read the following samples from The Little Red Book and write your quotations in the same style. Like the Little Red Book, your quotations should reflect current realities, but also speak to the society you want to live in. For example, a quotation about the US economy might read, “The revolution will stamp out corrupt banking practices that imperil our country and create an unwavering code to ensure that the investments of all consumers will be safe in perpetuity.”

Examples:

[Our purpose is] to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind.

The revolution, and the recognition of class and class struggle, are necessary for peasants and the Chinese people to overcome both domestic and foreign enemy elements. This is not a simple, clean, or quick struggle.

A communist must be selfless, with the interests of the masses at heart.

Topic	Quotation
Education	
Police	
Capitalism	
Foreign Policy	

Women	
Building Our Country Through Diligence and Frugality	
Heroism and Patriotism	
War	
Youth	
Culture and Art	
Entertainment and Media	
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Heroism and Patriotism:

- “A hero is first a hero to himself by succeeding”
- “Heroes never die, but villains of the country do”

Foreign Policy:

- “American ideologies should be implemented in all other countries”
- “We must keep our country safe by terrorizing people in other countries, so they fear us”

Capitalism:

- “Let nothing come between you and the pursuit of money”
- “Capitalism will only work if it benefits 1% of our great nation”

Police:

- “Independent thought, counter to the ideals of the capitalist nation, must be beaten out at all cost”
- “Obey the law and have nothing to hide so that there is no reason to need privacy”

Women:

- “Work hard and perfect your child-rearing abilities so that you can realize your full potential”
- “A good American woman is capable of thinking and acting on her own accord, and also of complying to her male counterparts, particularly her husband and boss”

Education:

- “There’s no sleep for the scholar, when striving for future success in the present”
- “The brain is like a sponge, unquenchable and expandable, yearning to be filled with knowledge through hard work and dedication”

Youth:

- “The youth are our future, brainwash them while we can”
- “The children are our future, so we will make their education expensive and challenge them to find a way to pay for it”

Entertainment and Media:

- “We will make movies based on male characters. Those about females will follow her journey in finding a male to fall in love with”
- “The people should be blind and let us guide them to the light”

War:

- “The only way to end a war is with a war”
- “Dying for your country due to the orders of an old man in an office is what you should aspire to do”

Culture and Art:

- “America is a place where different cultures can come together; however, members of their respective cultures must be ethnocentric”
- “Oh, is that something you can’t understand? It’s called Modern Art”