The evolution of teaching mathematical modeling takes place for social, scientific, and economic reasons. In this presentation, we will consider this evolution in three historical periods. The earliest evidence of mathematical modeling ideas in China appears in the book JiuZhang SuanShu, or also known as Nine Chapters on the Mathematical Art (Nine Chapters) in the 1st century CE. This was used as a textbook until Western science was introduced into the Far East around 1600 AD. Between 1958 and 1962, a group of Chinese mathematicians emphasized the teaching of mathematical modeling to workers and farmers, and popularized mathematical modeling thinking to high school students by solving real world problems. Since 1990, high school and college mathematical modeling competitions have been organized in Beijing and Shanghai, and the Mathematics National Curriculum included mathematical modeling as a standard for mathematical practice in 2000. Examples of teaching mathematical modeling in the three periods will be discussed. (Received September 17, 2013)