

Chapter Preview

This chapter will introduce you to the history of ancient China.

Section 1

The Geography of China's River Valleys

Section 2

Confucius and His Teachings

Section 3

Warring Kingdoms Unite

Section 4

Achievements of Ancient China



Target Reading Skill

Main Idea In this chapter you will focus on skills you can use to identify the main ideas as you read.

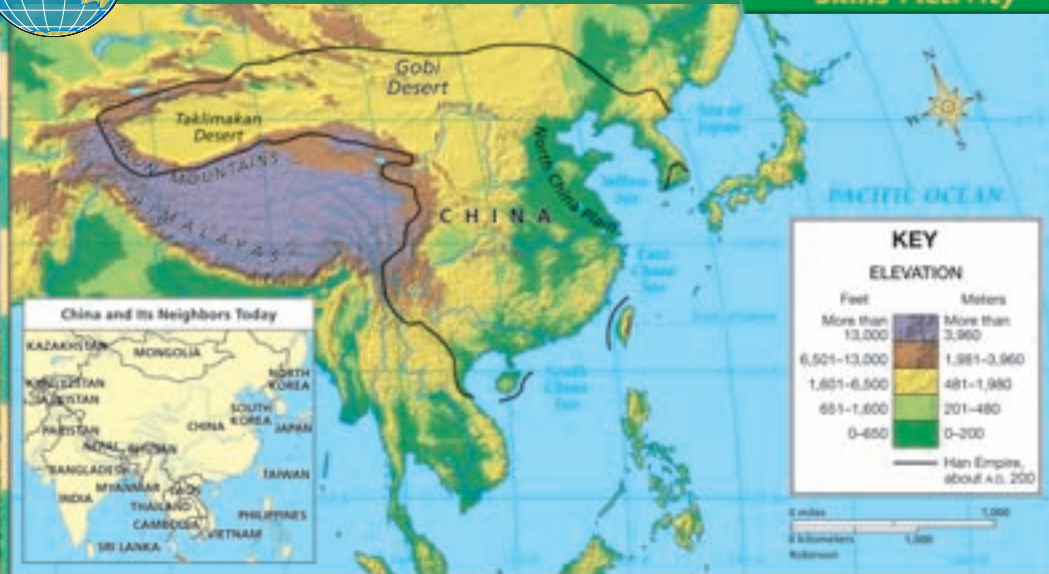
► [The Great Wall of China](#)





Ancient China

MAP MASTER[™] Skills Activity



Location Notice that the boundaries of ancient China are marked by seas and mountains. **Identify** What other geographical features do you notice about ancient China? **Draw Conclusions** Choose a place on the map where you think Chinese civilization might have begun, and explain your choice.

Go Online
PHSchool.com Use Web Code
lbp-2511 for step-by-step
map skills practice.



The Geography of China's River Valleys

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section you will

1. Examine the geography of ancient China.
2. Find out about early civilization in China.
3. Learn about the importance of family ties in early Chinese society.

Taking Notes

As you read, look for details about China's river valleys. Copy the chart below, and use it to record your findings.



Target Reading Skill

Identify Main Ideas

The main idea is the most important point in a section of text. On page 137, the main idea for the section titled The Geography of Ancient China is stated in this sentence: "The climate, soil, landforms, and waterways varied greatly, depending on the region."

As you read, look for the main idea stated after each red heading.

Key Terms

- **loess** (LOH es) *n.* yellow-brown soil
- **dike** (dyk) *n.* a protective wall that controls or holds back water
- **extended family** (ek STEN did FAM uh lee) *n.* closely related people of several generations

What words would you use to describe dragons? You might think of these imaginary beasts as being fierce and scary. People of some cultures would agree with you. But to the ancient Chinese people, the dragon was a respected spirit, not a terrible monster. In ancient China, dragons were friendly beasts that brought good luck. Dragon gods were believed to be responsible for the rains that made the fields fertile. In China, dragon rain ceremonies date as far back as the 500s B.C.

A sculpture of a Chinese dragon



The Chinese also used the image of this respected spirit to show the importance of their rivers. They traditionally described their rivers as dragons. The dragon's limbs were the smaller streams. They flowed into the dragon's body, or main river. The dragon's mouth was the delta, where the river flowed into the sea. Rivers were important to the development of civilization in China. Other landforms and climate played an important role as well.

The Geography of Ancient China

Ancient China covered a large area. The climate, soil, landforms, and waterways varied greatly, depending on the region. Turn to the map on page 135 to study the geography of ancient China.

Contrasting Climate and Landforms The North China Plain is located in East Asia. It is built up of soil deposits from the Huang (hwahng) River.

The North China Plain and its surrounding highlands, as well as far northern China, have only a brief, but intense, summer rainy season caused by monsoon winds. However, the region doesn't get much rain the rest of the year. As a result, the climate is very dry.

The climate in the south, in contrast, is warm and wet. Monsoons from the South China Sea bring heavy rains to southern China from March to September. Light rain falls the rest of the year.



A painting of a river voyage in China

Effects on Civilization Geographic barriers such as mountains and seas separated China from other lands. As a result, the Chinese had little knowledge of the civilizations of Egypt, India, Greece, and Rome. They were so sure that they lived at the center of the world that they called themselves the Middle Kingdom.

China's rivers overflowed their banks each spring, bringing fresh, fertile topsoil to the land. For that reason, China's first farming villages developed along its rivers. Civilization began along the Huang River and later spread south to wetter land along the Chang, China's longest river.

Terrace Farming

A man grows a crop of millet in northern China. **Apply Information** Why does it make sense to grow crops on terraces in this part of China?



A woman collects water from the Huang River. ▶

Yellow River The Huang is the second-longest river in China. The word *huang* means “yellow” in Chinese. It is called the “yellow river” because of the **loess (LOH es), or yellow-brown soil**, that its waters carry along. When the Huang floods, it deposits loess on the surrounding plain. Over many years, the Huang has carpeted the North China Plain with a thick layer of fertile soil. There, the Chinese grow a grain called millet. Millet has been an important part of the Chinese diet for thousands of years.



China’s Sorrow The Chinese people also called the Huang China’s Sorrow. It brought life to the land, but it also took life away. Destructive floods could come without warning, sometimes as often as every two years. Some floods drowned thousands of people. At times, the floodwaters ran with such force that they cut an entirely new path over the land. As a result, the course of the river could change by hundreds of miles.

Flood Control To help control the flooding, early Chinese people built dikes along the banks of the Huang. **A dike is a protective wall that holds back the waters.** As more loess settled to the bottom of the river, the level of the river rose. Eventually, the river rose high enough to overflow the dikes, causing even more deadly floods. Despite such dangers, the early Chinese people continued to settle along the banks of the Huang.

The Yellow River

You can see from this photograph why the Huang’s Chinese name means “yellow river.” **Analyze Images** How is the land near the river used?

✓ Reading Check What did the Chinese do to control flooding?



Early Civilization in China

Early farmers of the North China Plain probably were once nomads who moved from place to place to hunt and gather food. Historians do not know exactly when the first farming settlements developed in the Huang Valley. Some think it was as early as 5000 B.C. These early farming societies grew into civilizations that controlled parts of the Huang Valley.

The Shang Dynasty The Shang dynasty was the first civilization in China. It probably arose sometime around 1760 B.C. The Shang people built China's first cities. Among their many accomplishments was the production of some of the finest bronze work of ancient China.

The Shang people also produced the first Chinese writing system. Like Mesopotamia's cuneiform and our own alphabet, the Chinese writing system could be used for different languages. This was helpful for communication, because China had many regional languages.

About 600 years after the founding of the Shang dynasty, a new group emerged. This group, known as the Zhou (joh) people, lived in the Wei Valley to the west of the Shang people.

The Zhou Dynasty The territory of the Zhou people partly bordered the Shang territory. Sometimes these two neighbors lived peacefully side by side. At other times, they fought over territory. Finally, the Zhou conquered the Shang in about 1122 B.C. The Zhou dynasty ruled over ancient China for almost 1,000 years. This long period is divided into two parts—the earlier Western Zhou dynasty and the later Eastern Zhou dynasty. It was near the end of the Eastern Zhou dynasty that a period known as the Warring States began. During that time, small kingdoms fought for control over one another until a new dynasty—the Qin (chin)—finally emerged.

Mandate of Heaven Sometimes Chinese rulers inherited the throne. At other times, they fought for the right to rule. In either instance, the Chinese believed that rulers came to power because it was their destiny, or fate. This idea was called the Mandate of Heaven. A mandate is a law, or an order. The Mandate of Heaven supported a leader's right to rule his people. It also gave a father authority over his family.



Identify Main Ideas

Which sentence states the main idea under the heading Early Civilization in China?



A Shang dynasty turtle shell shows one of the earliest examples of Chinese writing.

✓ Reading Check What was the Mandate of Heaven?



Importance of the Family

The family was the center of early Chinese society. It was considered to be of far more importance than the individual or the nation. A person's first responsibility was always to the family. The family, in turn, was each person's chief source of well-being.

Traditional Families A household in ancient China might contain as many as five generations living together. This meant that small children lived with their great-great-grandparents as well as their parents, uncles and aunts, cousins, brothers and sisters, and so on. These **closely related people are called an extended family**. In rich families, the members might live together in one big home. But most of China's people were poor. In farming villages, members of the extended family might live in separate one-room cottages. The cottages were within easy walking distance from one another.

A Chinese Family

Wealthy Chinese families could afford to have their portraits painted, like this one dating from the late 1700s. **Analyze Images** How do we know that the family members in this portrait are probably part of an extended family?

Family Authority The status of each person in a Chinese extended family depended on his or her age and sex. The center of authority was usually the oldest man. He had the most privileges and the most power in the family. He decided who his children and grandchildren would marry. When children were disrespectful, he punished them severely. After the oldest male died, by tradition all his lands were divided among his sons. Each son then started his own household.


Women's Roles Women were considered to be of lower status than men. According to tradition, women were bound by what were called the three obediences: to obey their fathers in youth, their husbands after their marriage, and their sons in widowhood. Four virtues also guided women's behavior in ancient China: morality, modesty, proper speech, and domestic skills. When a woman married, she left her household and became part of her husband's family. In her new household, she was expected to obey her husband and respect the wishes of her mother-in-law.



Bronze statue of a Chinese girl with a lamp, around 100 B.C. ►

Family Names In the 300s B.C., Chinese established the practice of using inherited family names along with a personal name. The inherited name was passed down from father to child. The other was for the individual. Examples of present-day family names include Mao, Chan, and Lu. Of course, people in the United States also use two names. In Chinese society, however, the family name comes first. If this system were used in American society, you would know the first President of the United States as Washington George, not George Washington. Think of other famous people in American history. What would their names be in the Chinese naming style?

The tradition of using family names first dates back to China's earliest times. It showed how important the family was in China. Centuries later, a great philosopher, or thinker, called Confucius (kun FYOO shus) had ideas about the role of the family in Chinese society. These ideas would have a great effect on the Chinese people.

 **Reading Check** What factors determined a person's status within early Chinese families?



Royal Seals

Emperors used seals, like the decorated cube above, to mark their names in ink. The characters shown at the top left representing the emperor's name are carved into the bottom face of the cube. **Infer** Why do you think the ancient Chinese began using family names in addition to personal names?



Section 1 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.



Target Reading Skill

State the main ideas of each of the red headings in Section 1.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) **Identify Effects** How did the Huang River affect ancient Chinese civilization?
(b) **Compare** What do you think ancient China had in common with the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India?

- (a) **Recall** What was the first known civilization in China?
(b) **Draw Conclusions** Describe the importance of China's first civilization. What effect do you think it had on later civilizations in ancient China?
- (a) **Recall** Describe the importance of family in early China.
(b) **Apply Information** In ancient China, members of an extended family often lived together in one home. How do you think the ancient Chinese benefited from their family structure?

Writing Activity

Suppose you were a member of an ancient Chinese family. Write a description of what your life would have been like.

Writing Tip Specific details will bring your description to life. First focus on one important aspect of life in ancient China that you want to describe. Then choose two or three interesting details to make your description more colorful.



Section 2

Confucius and His Teachings

Prepare to Read

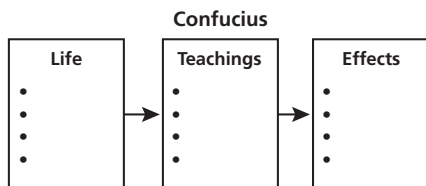
Objectives

In this section you will

1. Learn about the life of Confucius.
2. Find out about the teachings of Confucius.
3. Understand the influence Confucianism had on Chinese society.

Taking Notes

As you read, summarize the teachings of Confucius and the influence they had on China. Copy the chart below, and use it to record your findings.



Target Reading Skill

Identify Supporting Details

The main idea of a section of text is supported by details. These details may explain the main idea or give examples. On the next page, the main idea for the text under the heading *The Life of Confucius* is stated in this sentence: “Confucius was the most famous—and important—of the early Chinese thinkers.”

As you read, note the details following each of the blue headings that tell more about the life of Confucius.

Key Terms

- **Confucius** (kun FYOO shus) *n.* (551– 479 B.C.) a Chinese philosopher and teacher whose beliefs had a great influence on Chinese life
- **philosophy** (fih LAHS uh fee) *n.* a system of beliefs and values
- **civil service** (siv ul SUR vis) *n.* the group of people whose job it is to carry out the work of the government



One day, the Chinese teacher and philosopher **Confucius** and his students were walking through the countryside. In the distance, they heard a woman crying. As they came around a bend in the road, they saw the woman kneeling at a grave. “Why are you crying?” they asked her. “Because,” she answered, “a tiger killed my husband’s father. Later, the tiger also killed my husband. Now, the tiger has killed my son as well.”

They then asked the woman, “Why do you stay in this place after these terrible things have happened?” The woman answered, “Because there are no cruel rulers here.” Confucius turned to his students and said, “Remember this.

A cruel ruler is fiercer and more feared than a tiger.”

After the death of Confucius, people told many stories about him. Like the story of the woman and the tiger, most stories contained an important lesson.

Confucius, c. 551– 479 B.C.



The Life of Confucius

Confucius was the most famous—and important—of the early Chinese thinkers. The Chinese called him Kong Fu Zi (kong foo dzih), or “Master Kong.” *Confucius* is the Latinized version of this name.

The Early Years Confucius was born in 551 B.C. to a noble but poor family of the North China Plain. He loved learning and was mostly self-taught. He hoped to advance to an important government office, but he never succeeded in that way. Instead, he decided to try teaching.

A Pioneer Teacher Many historians think that Confucius was China’s first professional teacher. Confucius charged students a fee to take classes. He taught the students his views of life and government. He was a dedicated teacher:

“From the very poorest upward . . . none has ever come to me without receiving instruction. I instruct only a student who bursts with eagerness.”

—Confucius

Later in his life, Confucius searched for a ruler who would follow his teachings, but he could find no such ruler. He died in 479 B.C. at age 73. By the time of his death, he believed his life had been a failure. He had no way of knowing that his teachings would be followed for many centuries.

✓ Reading Check What kind of students did Confucius like to teach?

A Royal Welcome

A drawing shows Confucius meeting with leaders from various Chinese kingdoms. **Infer** In what ways does the artist suggest the importance of Confucius?



Identify Supporting Details

What detail in the paragraph at the left supports the idea that Confucius was an important Chinese thinker?

Relationships Based on the Teachings of Confucius

▼ Ruler and ruled



▲ Father and son

Older brother
and younger
brother ►

Husband and
wife ►



Five Human Relationships

Confucius believed that Chinese society was built upon the five relationships shown above. **Conclude** According to Confucius, how does a fair and just ruler benefit society?

The Teachings of Confucius

Confucius did not claim to be an original thinker. He felt that his role was to pass on the forgotten teachings of wise people from an earlier age. In many of his teachings he tried to persuade rulers to reform. He also hoped to bring peace, stability, and prosperity to China's kingdoms.

Confucianism Confucius himself never wrote down his teachings. Instead, his students gathered a collection of his sayings after his death. Together, these writings made up a **system of beliefs and values, or a philosophy**. That philosophy became known as Confucianism. Confucianism was one of several important philosophies of ancient China. Over time, it began to govern many aspects of life there.

Bringing Order to Society Confucius lived during a time of frequent warfare in China. Powerful rulers of several Chinese states, or kingdoms, fought one another for the control of land. They seemed more interested in gaining power than in ruling wisely. Confucius hoped to persuade these rulers to change their ways and bring peace and order to China.

The goal of Confucius was to bring order to society. He believed that if people could be taught to behave properly toward one another, order and peace would result. Society would prosper.

Confucius' ideas were studied in books like this one.

▼ **Friend and friend**



Respecting Others Confucius said that people should know their place in the family and in society. They ought to respect the people above and below them and treat others justly. He described five human relationships: ruler and ruled; father and son; husband and wife; older brother and younger brother; and friend and friend. Then he explained how people should behave in each of these relationships. Confucius said that people in authority—princes or parents—must set good examples. For example, if a ruler was fair, his people would follow his

example and treat one another fairly, too. Confucius summarized his ideas about relationships in a simple way. It is similar to what Christians and Jews call the Golden Rule: “Do not do to others what you would not want done to yourself.”

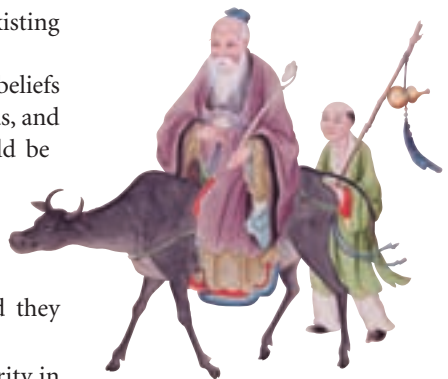
Religious Traditions Although Confucianism is a philosophy, it has also functioned as a religion for many people. Like Hindus or Buddhists, those who practice Confucianism are part of a moral community. The teachings of Confucius helped guide many of the ancient Chinese in how to behave. But many ancient Chinese also practiced Confucianism alongside their existing religious traditions.

Ancient China was home to many kinds of religious beliefs and practices: the worship of ancestors, the honoring of gods, and the belief in spirits. Most Chinese believed that life should be lived in harmony with nature. Happiness came from living a balanced life. A religious philosophy known as Taoism (DOW iz um) supported these ideas. Taoism was based on the writings of Laozi (LOW dzuh), a Chinese thinker who lived in the 500s B.C. The Taoists loved nature, and they believed in leading simple and selfless lives.

At times, Taoism would rival Confucianism for popularity in China. But overall, the teachings of Confucius would remain the most widely studied of Chinese philosophies.

✓ **Reading Check** Describe the religious traditions of ancient China.

Go Online
PHSchool.com Use Web Code
mup-0822 for an interactive
tour of the temple of Confucius.



A painting of Laozi riding a buffalo, attended by a servant



A Chinese emperor oversees students at a civil service exam.

The Influence of Confucius

The teachings of Confucius came to have a major effect on Chinese government. They became part of the basic training for members of the civil service. **The civil service is the group of people who carry out the work of government.**

A Merit System Before the ideas of Confucius took hold, government posts were generally given to the sons of powerful people. Afterward, any man could hold a government post based on merit—that is, on how qualified he was or how well he did his job. Candidates for government jobs had to pass official examinations. These exams were based on the teachings of Confucius.

Rising to High Positions The examination system did not open government jobs to everyone. Candidates still had to know how to read. This rule made it difficult for a poor man to enter the government. But it was not impossible. Many talented but poor young men learned to read and rose to high government positions.

Confucius would have been surprised at the influence he had on China. He did not consider himself particularly wise or good. But he left a lasting mark on Chinese life.

✓ Reading Check Why was it difficult for poor men to work in the civil service?



Section 2 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

State the details that support the main idea on page 145.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

1. (a) **Recall** How did Confucius become a teacher?

(b) **Transfer Information**

Confucius would teach only those students who wanted to learn. How does his rule apply to your experience as a student?

2. (a) **List** What were the basic teachings of Confucius?

(b) **Explain** Why did Confucius think it was important to teach rulers how to behave?

3. (a) **Describe** How did the ideas of Confucius change the way civil servants were chosen in ancient China?

(b) **Predict** Confucius hoped to become a government worker, but he became a teacher instead. Do you think his influence on Chinese society would have been different if he had gotten his wish? Explain your answer.

Writing Activity

Suppose that you are a government official in a small state in northern China. One day, a wandering teacher named Confucius arrives. Write a journal entry that describes what Confucius says and how your ruler reacts to him.

Go Online
PHSchool.com

For: An activity on Confucius
Visit: PHSchool.com
Web Code: lbd-2502



Section
3

Warring Kingdoms Unite

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section, you will

1. Learn about the rise of the Qin dynasty.
2. Find out how Emperor Shi Huangdi attempted to unify the economy and culture of China.
3. Examine the actions of the Han dynasty's leaders.

Taking Notes

As you read, find details about Chinese rulers and life in China during the Qin and the Han dynasties. Copy the table below, and use it to record your findings.

Qin Dynasty	Han Dynasty
•	•
•	•
•	•

Target Reading Skill

Identify Implied Main Ideas Sometimes main ideas are not stated directly. However, all the details in a section of text add up to a main idea. For example, after reading and adding up all the details on page 150 following the heading The Qin Dynasty, you could state the main idea this way: “China was unified and strengthened by its first emperor, Shi Huangdi.”

Carefully read the details in the paragraphs below. Then state the main idea.

Key Terms

- **Shi Huangdi** (shur hwahng DEE) *n.* founder of the Qin dynasty and China's first emperor
- **currency** (KUR un see) *n.* the type of money used by a group or a nation
- **Liu Bang** (LYOH bahng) *n.* the founder of the Han dynasty
- **Wudi** (woo dee) *n.* Chinese emperor who brought the Han dynasty to its greatest strength
- **warlord** (WAWR lawrd) *n.* a local leader of an armed group

In 1974, several farmers were digging a well in a grove of trees in northern China. Six feet down, they found some terra cotta, a reddish type of pottery. Another five feet down, they unearthed the terra-cotta head of a man. Archaeologists took over and began digging. They discovered more than 6,000 life-sized statues of soldiers and horses, along with wood and bronze chariots and metal weapons. It was a terra-cotta army. For more than 2,000 years, these buried soldiers had kept watch at the tomb of **China's first emperor, Shi Huangdi (shur hwahng DEE).**

With his underground army, Shi Huangdi had planned to rule a second empire in the afterlife. He had also made grand plans for the real-life empire he created in China. His dynasty, he boasted, would last for 10,000 generations.



These terra-cotta warriors guarded Shi Huangdi's tomb in the ancient city of Chang'an, China.



The Great Wall of China

The Great Wall winds its way across the mountains and plains of northern China. **Infer** What does the size of the wall tell you about Shi Huangdi's enemies?

The Qin Dynasty

Shi Huangdi's dynasty lasted only two generations, but that was still a huge accomplishment. Before that time, China was divided into seven warring kingdoms. Shi Huangdi conquered these kingdoms to unify China.

China's First Emperor Shi Huangdi's original name was Zhao Zheng (jow jeng). He ruled the Qin (chin) people, who lived along China's western border. By 221 B.C., Zheng had extended his rule over most of the land that makes up modern-day China. When Zheng established the Qin dynasty, he took the name Shi Huangdi, meaning "First Emperor." Because Qin is sometimes spelled *Ch'in*, the name China comes from the Qin dynasty.

Strengthening the Empire Shi Huangdi sought to strengthen China through strong and harsh rule. One of his first tasks was to protect the new empire from its enemies.

Throughout history, nomads had attacked China along its vast northern border. Shi Huangdi had a plan to end these border wars. He ordered what became the largest construction project in Chinese history. It is now called the Great Wall of China. Turn to page 152 and locate the wall on the map titled Qin and Han Empires.

Previous rulers had built walls along the border. Shi Huangdi decided to connect them. He ordered farmers from their fields and merchants from their stores to form an army of hundreds of thousands of workers. Shi Huangdi's wall took about ten years to construct. After Shi Huangdi died, the wall fell into disrepair. Over time, other emperors repaired the wall and added new sections to it. Because some sections overlap, the Great Wall is really a system of walls. In all, the Great Wall stretches about 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometers) in length.

Organizing the Government To help put down rebellions within the empire, Shi Huangdi put thousands of farmers to work building roads. The new roads enabled his armies to rush to the scene of any uprisings. The emperor killed or imprisoned any local rulers who opposed him. Shi Huangdi divided all of China into areas called districts. Each district had a government run by the emperor's trusted officials.



✓ Reading Check How was China's Great Wall built?

Unifying Economy and Culture

Shi Huangdi was not content to unify the government of China. He also wanted the many peoples of his united kingdom to have one economy and one culture.

Economic and Cultural Improvements Shi Huangdi declared that one **currency, or type of money**, be used throughout China. The new currency was a round coin with a square hole in the middle. A common currency made it easier for one region of China to trade goods with another. Shi Huangdi also ordered the creation of common weights and measures, an improved system of writing, and a law code.

Restricting Freedoms Shi Huangdi also tried to control the thoughts of his people. In 213 B.C., he outlawed the ideas of Confucius and other important thinkers. Instead, he required that people learn the philosophies of Qin scholars.

The Qin believed in legalism, the idea that people should be punished for bad behavior and rewarded for good behavior. Legalists thought that the people of China should work to serve the government and the emperor. The Qin dynasty practiced a strict and sometimes brutal form of legalism. Shi Huangdi commanded that all the books in China be burned except those about medicine, technology, and farming. Hundreds of scholars protested the order. Shi Huangdi had them all killed.

The End of a Dynasty Shi Huangdi's death in 210 B.C. was followed by four years of chaos and civil war that ended in the murder of his son. Power then passed to Shi Huangdi's grandson, but he could not hold China together. Rebellions broke out. The dynasty that was supposed to last for 10,000 generations lasted for only 15 years.

Reading Check How did Shi Huangdi try to limit his people's freedoms?

Bronze cooking pot, Shang dynasty



The Rise and Fall of Chinese Dynasties

A new dynasty rises.

- A strong ruler defeats other local rulers.
- The new dynasty expands China's borders.

The new dynasty rules.

- It restores peace.
- It chooses loyal officials.
- It makes reforms.

The dynasty grows weak.

- The large empire becomes difficult to govern.
- Leaders lose control of the provinces.

A period of violence follows. Local rulers fight for power.

Lady of the Emperor's court, statue, A.D. 600s

The dynasty falls. Rebellions destroy the weakened dynasty.

Diagram Skills

Although many different dynasties ruled China throughout its long history, each rose and fell in a similar pattern. **Describe** Why do dynasties fall? **Analyze Information** Why might a dynasty become weaker as it grows larger?

Qin and Han Empires



Human-Environment Interaction Both natural and human-made features shaped the borders of the Qin and Han empires.

Identify What feature formed the northern border of the Qin Empire? **Infer** What geographical feature may have limited the expansion of the Han Empire to the southwest?

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map skills practice.



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PHSchool.com Use Web Code
mup-0823 for an interactivity
on military technology in China.

The Han Dynasty

One of the rebels who helped overthrow the Qin dynasty was a talented ruler named Liu Bang (LYOH bahng). **By 202 B.C., Liu Bang won out over his rivals and became emperor of China.** Born a peasant, Liu Bang became the first emperor of a new dynasty: the Han (hahn). Liu Bang created a stable government, but one that was less harsh than Shi Huangdi's.

Stable governments were a feature of the Han dynasty, which lasted for about 400 years. Han rulers realized that they needed educated people to work in the government. They set up the civil service system based on Confucianism to meet that need.

Wudi: The Warrior Emperor In 140 B.C., Liu Bang's great-grandson, Wudi, came to power. **Under Wudi (woo dee), the Han dynasty reached its greatest power.** About 15 years old when he took the throne, Wudi ruled for more than 50 years.

Wudi's main interests were war and military matters. In fact, his name means "Warrior Emperor." He made improvements to Shi Huangdi's Great Wall. He also strengthened the army. By the end of Wudi's reign, Chinese rule stretched west into Central Asia, east into present-day northern and central Korea, and south into present-day Vietnam. Locate the Han Empire on the map titled Qin and Han Empires.

Links to Art

Han Dynasty Bronze Work

Han dynasty artisans created beautiful objects of bronze, including finely made mirrors. On one side of the mirror, the metal was polished enough to show a reflection. The back was decorated with gems, animal symbols, and writing. Mirrors were important in China because they symbolized self-knowledge. At the right is the decorated side of a bronze mirror.



The End of the Han Empire The great emperor Wudi died in 87 B.C. China's stability and prosperity continued under later Han emperors. Many new ideas and technologies developed. But over time, the empire began to weaken. A series of very young emperors—one was only 100 days old—ruled the empire. People within the government struggled for power over these young emperors. While they struggled, no one paid attention to running the empire. Roads and canals fell into disrepair.

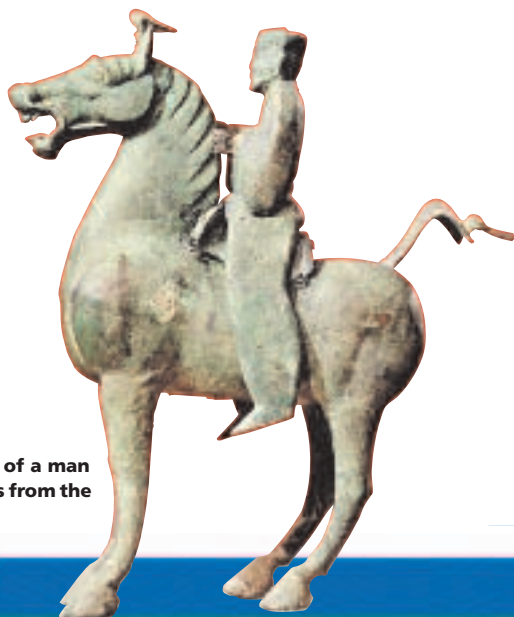
As the rule of the emperors weakened, **warlords**, **local leaders of armed groups**, gained power. The last Han emperor was kept in power by one such warlord, named Cao Pei. At first Cao Pei tried to control the empire through the emperor. In A.D. 220, he declared an end to the Han dynasty. In its place, he set up his own Wei dynasty. However, the Wei dynasty had control only over parts of northern China. It ended after about 50 years, and China broke up into a number of smaller kingdoms.

 **Reading Check** What happened in A.D. 220?



Identify Implied Main Ideas

In one sentence, state what all the details in the paragraph at the left imply.



This bronze statue of a man on horseback dates from the Han dynasty.



Section 3 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

State the three main ideas in Section 3.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) **Describe** What measures did Shi Huangdi take to strengthen the empire and organize the government?
(b) **Summarize** Why is Shi Huangdi a major figure in Chinese history?

- (a) **Identify** What measures did Shi Huangdi take to unite the economy and culture of China?
(b) **Analyze Information** How did all of Shi Huangdi's efforts strengthen the empire? How did his leadership hurt the empire?
- (a) **Recall** What characterized the government of China during the Han dynasty?
(b) **Compare and Contrast** Compare the ways the emperors of the Qin dynasty and the emperors of the Han dynasty viewed the ideas of Confucius. How were their viewpoints similar or different?

Writing Activity

The farmers who discovered Shi Huangdi's terra-cotta army made one of the most important archaeological finds in history. Write a list of questions that you would like to ask them about their discovery.

Writing Tip Write your questions in a logical order. For instance, you could begin with a few general questions. Later, narrow your focus with more specific questions.



Section 4

Achievements of Ancient China

Prepare to Read

Objectives

In this section you will

1. Learn about the Silk Road.
2. Find out about the Han dynasty's respect for tradition and learning.
3. Discover the important advances in technology that were made in China during the Han dynasty.

Taking Notes

As you read, create an outline of this section. Copy the outline below and use it to get started.

- | |
|----------------------------|
| I. The Silk Road |
| A. A series of routes |
| 1. |
| 2. |
| B. |
| II. Tradition and learning |



Target Reading Skill

Identify Supporting Details

Details in a section of text may explain the main idea or give examples that support it. The main idea for the text on page 157 under the red heading The Silk Road, can be stated this way: "Both ideas and goods were exchanged along the Silk Road, a series of routes that connected the East to the West."

As you read, note the details following each of the blue headings that support the main idea.

Key Terms

- **Silk Road** (silk rohhd) *n.* an ancient trade route between China and Europe
- **silk** (silk) *n.* a valuable cloth, originally made only in China from threads spun by caterpillars called silkworms
- **Sima Qian** (sih MAH chen) *n.* (c. 145–85 B.C.) a Chinese scholar, astronomer, and historian; author of the most important history of ancient China, *Historical Records*



The caravan slowly plods across the hot sand of the Taklimakan Desert. Weary travelers wearing long robes sway on top of camels. Riderless camels are heaped high with heavy loads.

Suddenly the camels stop, huddle together, and snarl viciously. An old man riding the lead camel turns around and shouts. No one can hear him because the screaming wind drowns out his words. The man jumps from his camel and quickly wraps a strip of felt around his own nose and mouth. The other travelers rush to dismount and cover their faces, too. Just then, the sandstorm hits with full force. The fine desert sand flies at the caravan, stinging man and beast with needle-sharp grit.

Then, as quickly as it came, the sandstorm is gone. The travelers wipe sand from their eyes and tend to their camels. They have survived just one of the many challenges of traveling on the **Silk Road**, an ancient trade route between China and Europe.

A camel caravan in Gansu Province, western China



The Silk Road

MAP MASTER Skills Activity



Movement Travel along the Silk Road was very dangerous. Travelers faced geographical and human-made barriers, attacks by robbers, and extreme weather conditions. **Note** Why did the Silk Road split into two routes in Central Asia? **Analyze Information** Judging from the map, what might have been the most difficult part of the route?

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The Silk Road

The Emperor Wudi's conquests in the west brought the Chinese into contact with the people of Central Asia. Trade with these people introduced the Chinese to such new foods as grapes, walnuts, and garlic. In turn, Chinese goods and ideas passed to the peoples living to the West. This exchange of goods gave rise to a major trade route—the Silk Road. This ran all the way from China to the Mediterranean Sea.

Connecting Roads The Silk Road was a series of routes covering more than 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers), a little less than the distance from present-day Chicago to Hawaii. Follow the routes on the map above titled The Silk Road.

The Silk Road followed a challenging route through mountainous country and desert land. The road passed through Persia and Mesopotamia. Finally, it turned north to the city of Antioch (AN tee ahk), in present-day Turkey. From there, traders shipped goods across the Mediterranean to Rome, Greece, Egypt, and other lands that bordered the Mediterranean.



A terra-cotta statue of a traveler on a camel, about A.D. 700



Making Silk

A scroll from the 1100s shows Chinese women beating silk fibers in a trough. Silk was used to make musical instruments, fishing line, and even paper. **Infer** Why was the Silk Road named after this material?



Identify Supporting Details

What details in the last paragraph on this page tell about tradition and learning during the Han dynasty?

A Route for Goods Few travelers ever journeyed the entire length of the Silk Road. Generally, goods were passed from trader to trader as they crossed Asia. With each trade along the route, the price of the goods went up. By the time the goods arrived at the end of their journey, they were very expensive.

The Silk Road got its name from **silk, a valuable cloth originally made only in China**. Han farmers had developed new methods for raising silkworms, the caterpillars that made the silk. Han workers found new ways to weave and dye the silk. These methods were closely guarded secrets. The penalty for revealing them was death.

The arrival of silk in Europe created great excitement. Wealthy Romans prized Chinese silk and were willing to pay high prices for it. And wealthy people in China would pay well for glass, horses, ivory, woolens, and linen cloth from Rome.

A Route for Ideas More than goods traveled the road. New ideas did, too. For example, missionaries from India traveled to China along a section of the road and brought the religion of Buddhism with them. By the time the Han dynasty ended, Buddhism was becoming a major religion in China.

✓ Reading Check What are silkworms?



Tradition and Learning

Traditional Chinese ideas flourished during the Han dynasty. People returned to the teachings of Confucius. A renewed interest in learning led one Han scholar to record the early history of China. His efforts helped the people of China understand their past.

Respect for Learning Han rulers found that during troubled times in the past, many people had lost respect for their traditions. As a way of bringing back this respect, rulers encouraged people to return to the teachings of Confucius. Rulers of the Han and later dynasties also required members of the civil service to be educated in Confucian teachings.

The arts and scholarship flourished under the Han dynasty. Expressive poetry reflected Chinese culture. Chinese scholars put together the first dictionary of the Chinese language. But the greatest advances happened in the field of history.

A History of China Until the time of the Han dynasty, the Chinese people had little knowledge of their own history. They knew only myths that had been passed down from generation to generation. Often, these stories were in conflict with one another. No one was sure exactly when the various Chinese rulers had lived or what each had accomplished.

The scholar Sima Qian (sih MAH chen) decided to solve the problem. **Sima Qian spent his life writing a history of China from mythical times to the reign of Wudi.** Sima described his work:

“I wish to examine all that encircles heaven and man. I want to probe the changes of the past and present.”

—Sima Qian

Sima Qian’s work, called *Historical Records*, is a major source of information about ancient China.

✓ Reading Check What problem did Sima Qian solve?

Han Technology

Because the Han government was stable, the Chinese could turn their attention to improving their society. During the Han dynasty, China became the most advanced civilization in the world.

Advances in Technology The Chinese made significant advances in farming tools and other technologies. Some of these advances are shown in the chart at the right, titled *Achievements in Ancient China*. During the Han dynasty, the Chinese invented many practical devices that did not reach Europe until centuries later. Among these was paper—something the world still depends on every day.

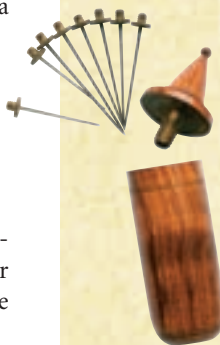
Arts, Medicine, and Technology

The Chinese made great advances during the Han dynasty. **Analyze** Which two inventions were especially useful to farmers? Explain your answer.

Achievements in Ancient China

The Arts

- Silk weaving
- Bronze working
- Architecture (temples and palaces)
- Poetry and history
- ▶ Jade carving



Medicine

- ◀ Acupuncture—the treatment of disease using needles
- Herbal remedies—the use of plants in the practice of medicine
- Circulatory system—the discovery that blood travels through the body

Technology

- Paper made from wood pulp
- Iron plow for breaking up soil
- Rudder—a device used to steer ships
- Seismoscope—a device that registers the occurrence of earthquakes
- Compass
- ▼ Wheelbarrow



A Chinese emperor's favorite horse, named Night-Shining White, is shown in this painting from the A.D. 700s.



The Invention of Paper The Chinese first used wooden scrolls and bones to keep records. Later, they wrote messages and even whole books on silk. Then, around A.D. 105, the Chinese recorded one of their greatest achievements: the invention of paper. Archaeological evidence shows that paper may have already been in use before that time. Early paper was made from materials such as tree bark, hemp, and old rags. The materials were soaked in water, beaten into pulp, and dried flat on a screen mold.

The availability of paper greatly influenced learning and the arts in China. After several centuries, the use of paper spread across Asia and into Europe. Eventually, paper replaced papyrus from Egypt as the material for scrolls and books.

The Han dynasty came to an end in the A.D. 200s. But its accomplishments were not forgotten. Today, people in China still call themselves “the children of Han.”

✓ Reading Check What did the Chinese write on before they invented paper?

Section 4 Assessment

Key Terms

Review the key terms at the beginning of this section. Use each term in a sentence that explains its meaning.

Target Reading Skill

State the details that support the main idea on page 158.

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) **Locate** Describe the route of the Silk Road.
- (b) **Infer** Why were the secrets of silk-making so closely guarded?

- (a) **List** In what ways did the Han dynasty show a respect for Chinese traditions?
- (b) **Draw Conclusions** Describe the importance of Sima Qian's role in preserving Chinese traditions.
- (a) **Recall** Name three important inventions or achievements during the Han dynasty.
- (b) **Predict** How did the achievements of the Han dynasty affect later generations of Chinese people, as well as other peoples?

Writing Activity

Suppose that you are a poet living in ancient Chang'an, at one end of the Silk Road. Write a poem about what you have seen or heard about the Silk Road from living in Chang'an.

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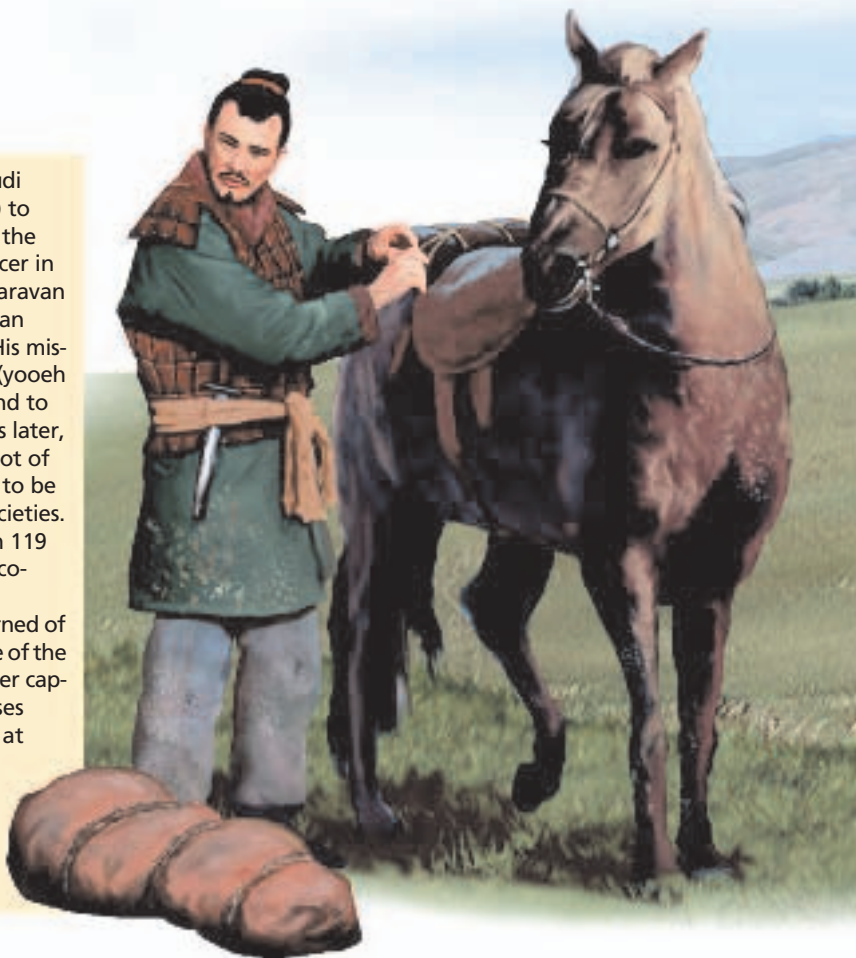


Focus On China's Western Frontier

Swiping down from the Mongolian plain, the legendary Xiongnu (shong noo) warriors came not to conquer, but to steal. They came on horseback, wild, dust-covered, and fierce. In attacks that terrorized Chinese border towns, the Xiongnu stole Chinese silks and other luxuries, galloping off with all they could carry. The great Han warrior emperor, Wudi, devoted his long half-century reign (140–87 B.C.) to taming China's frontier and exploring civilizations beyond the known world of his time.

The Expeditions Emperor Wudi chose Zhang Qian (jahng chyen) to lead a dangerous expedition to the western frontier. Zhang, an officer in Wudi's imperial guard, led the caravan (shown at the right) from the Han capital of Chang'an in 138 B.C. His mission was to befriend the Yuezhi (yoeh jur), enemies of the Xiongnu, and to rally them to war. Thirteen years later, Zhang returned—to tell Wudi not of war, but of unimagined wealth to be gained in trade with western societies. So Wudi sent him west again, in 119 B.C., to open government and economic ties with other lands.

During his travels, Zhang learned of swift horses owned by the people of the Fergana Valley. Wudi's forces later captured some of the Fergana horses (depicted in the bronze statue at the top of this page). Wudi's warriors ultimately drove the Xiongnu far from China's borders and opened a gateway to the west.





Han Bowl and Spoon

Everyday goods, such as this Han dynasty pottery, would have been useful on the expedition.



The First Expedition On their journey, Zhang and his men were captured by the Xiongnu. After ten years, they escaped. By the time Zhang met the Yuezhi, they were settled peacefully and had no appetite for war. Zhang continued west to gold-rich Bactria before heading home.



Assessment

Explain Why did Emperor Wudi send expeditions to China's western frontier?

Identify Effects How did these expeditions benefit China?

Making Valid Generalizations



Sometimes people make broad generalizations that are not really true.

“People who like to read a lot are not interested in sports.”

“Dog owners do not like cats.”

A broad statement about a group of people is called a stereotype. A stereotype is not based on factual knowledge, and it is often untrue and unfair.

To avoid using stereotypes, be careful when you make a generalization. Some generalizations are valid—that is, they have value or worth. They are probably true, because they are based on specific facts. Other generalizations are not valid. They might be based on rumors or impressions instead of on facts. A stereotype is a generalization that may not be valid.

Learn the Skill

To make a valid generalization, follow these steps:

Testing a Generalization

- Are there enough facts in your source to support the generalization?
- Do any other facts support the generalization?
- Which are stronger, the examples of the generalization or the exceptions to it?
- Does the statement generalize too broadly or stereotype a group of people? Look for words such as *all*, *always*, or *every*, which can make a generalization invalid.
- Words such as *some*, *many*, *most*, and *often* help prevent a statement from being too general.

- 1 Identify the specific facts that are contained within a source.**
Become familiar with the facts in a piece of text, a table, or some other source.
- 2 State what the facts have in common, and look for patterns.**
Do any of the facts fit together in a way that makes a point about a broad subject? Do the data in a table or a graph point toward some kind of general statement?
- 3 Make a generalization, or broad conclusion, about the facts.**
Write your generalization as a sentence or paragraph.
- 4 Test the generalization, and revise it if necessary.** You can test the validity of a generalization by using the guidelines in the box at left.

Practice the Skill

Turn to page 137, and reread the second paragraph that follows the title *Effects on Civilization*.

- 1 The title of the text will help you understand the topic. Find and write down at least three facts that relate to that topic.
- 2 From reading these facts, what major ideas can you learn about the topic? Do the facts suggest any ideas about China's rivers that are not specifically stated in the text?
- 3 Make a generalization about China's rivers and how they affected the growth of Chinese civilization. Make sure the facts support your statement.
- 4 If your statement does not meet the test for a valid generalization, try making it valid by rewriting it so that it is more limited.



Apply the Skill

We generalize in everyday speech: “Everybody loves the summer.” “Most kids I know are into sports.” “Nobody rents videos anymore. They rent DVDs.” Find and write down three valid generalizations, and explain why they are valid. You can use generalizations that you find in your textbook, or you can write your own based on facts you know. Write down the facts that support each generalization.

The Huang River, China

