

**DAY ONE** These lessons are for an ELD 5th/6th combo class. Introduction to the geography of China.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to describe and label the 4 basic geographic regions of China on a map. This lesson covers the geographic portion of the California Social Studies standard 6.6.2.

**RATIONALE:** It is important to learn about the geography of China in order to better understand the geography of our planet, our own country, state and city as well as other countries/civilizations we will study. Some career options for those who learn geography include: an urban planner, cartographer, jobs in transport and environmental management.

**MATERIALS:** plain outline map of China, plain outline map of USA, geographic maps of China, geographic maps of the USA, crayons, ELMO and/or overhead and projector.

**TEACHER LAUNCH:** Today we are going to describe and label the 4 geographic regions of China.

Why do you think we are learning this?

1. We are learning about the geographic regions of China in order to compare and contrast with our own country and others.
2. It will be on a quiz.
3. It will make learning of other countries easier next year.
4. Have students give their own reasons.

What is a geographic region?

A geographic region is an area of land with certain characteristics.

**Vocabulary:** Asia, continent, country, border, landform, geographic region, arid, plain, desert, highland, mountain, lowland, body of water, ocean, lakes, rivers, island, peninsula, and coastline.

What characteristics does a desert have? Answer: it is dry, little or no rainfall for long periods of time.

What characteristics do mountains have? Answer: they have a high elevation, it is not lowland.

What characteristics do lowlands have? Answer: lowland is land close to sea level and is not high in elevation.

What characteristics does the coast have? It's next/near the ocean.

**Activity: Guess the word Game:** After introducing vocabulary. Play game by giving the characteristics of each vocabulary word and the students guess which term you are describing. For example: "This area is very dry and has little rainfall".

Answer: desert.

**Activity:** Divide class into groups and have them compete for the answers to make it fun. Prizes or special privileges could be a reward.

Let's look to see if China has any of these geographic regions.

Using the projector, show a geographic map of China. Identify mountains, lowlands, deserts, and coastal region of China. Have students describe the characteristics of each. Identify the two main rivers: Yangzi and Yellow Rivers.

Students should recognize that China has four basic geographic regions and two major rivers. Pass out outline map. Have students label and color the map using different colors to show each region as well as the major rivers.

**Review:** How many geographic regions does China have? Answer: 4.

What are they? Answer: mountains, lowlands, deserts, and coastline. What are the major rivers? Answer: Yangzi and Yellow Rivers.

Show students a geographic map of the USA. Have students identify the geographic regions of the US and color these as well.

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What did you learn today? Why is it important to learn about the geography of China and the USA?

**ELA extension:** 1. Have students write a few sentences or a paragraph about what they learned about the geography of both China and the US. 2. Have students find out how many neighboring countries China has. Compare with the US and its neighboring countries. 3. Research the populations of both China and US.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment:** Geography

1. Which are the four regions of China? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Desert, lowland, mountains, and plateau.
  - b. Lowland, coastal, mountains and highlands.
  - c. Mountains, coastal, lowlands and deserts.
2. Describe each of the China's regions:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Explain how the regions of both China and the US are similar or different.
4. How many neighboring countries does China have? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many neighboring countries does the USA have? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Explain the characteristics of a desert. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Explain the characteristics of lowlands. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Explain the characteristics of a coast. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Explain the characteristics of mountains. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Name the two major rivers of China. \_\_\_\_\_

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**DAY TWO:**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** Students will understand what The Silk Road was and its importance. Ca. Standard 6.3.7, 6.3.5

**RATIONALE:** It is important to learn what the Silk Road was in order to better understand the sharing of cultures and ideas between Asia and the west.

**Background Knowledge:** Even though China was isolated by its geographic barriers, trade caused contact with the lands to the west to increase.

**Teacher Launch:** Students look at the tags on their clothes. Where was your shirt or shoes made? Let's make a list of the countries where our clothes come from. On whiteboard/chart, make a list. We get many different things from other countries. During the Han Dynasty and the Roman Empire, people also traded for all kinds of things from faraway places through a route called the Silk Road. Today we will understand what the Silk Road was and the significance to the Han Dynasty.

Show video clip on BrainPop, type in Silk Road under Social Studies tab. Discuss what they heard/saw on the clip. Questions?

**MATERIALS/Resources:** Whiteboard/chart paper, Social Studies book (World History, chapter 8, lesson 4. Pp 276-281) McDougal Littell. Map of The Silk Road, pictures off the internet of caravans, United Streaming video clip: China, The Silk Road, BrainPop.com video on Silk Road (a review quiz and test are available at the end of the clip which can be used for checking for understand or assessment).

**Vocabulary:** Silk Road, trade route, Asia, Europe, Middle East, caravan, maritime, cultural diffusion, trans-Eurasian, Han Dynasty, Roman Empire.

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**TEACH LAUNCH:** China is the world's oldest, continuous civilization. It has the largest population of any country in the world. China is full of rich resources, some very different from our own. The Chinese people have made great contributions in the areas of math, science, technology, and culture. This sharing of ideas began with The Silk Road during the Han Dynasty. The Silk Road made a great contribution to the political, economic and cultural exchange between China, India, and Europe where the Roman Empire was. Let's find out what was the Silk Road and why was it so important.

Let's read beginning on page 277 about the Silk Road. Students read as a class or independently pp. 277-280 taking notes on the vocabulary and important information in each section. Each section is concluded with a Review question.

**What was the Silk Road?**

The Silk Road was a very large network of trade routes that connected the many different civilizations of Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Europe during the Han Dynasty. About 2000 years ago, it was the only international road that existed. The Silk Road connected travelers, merchants, soldiers, missionaries, pilgrims, and traders from places as far apart as Ancient China, Persia, India, Arabia and even Rome. The Silk Road was one of the only ways for the people of these ancient regions to trade ideas(cultural diffusion), technology, religion (Confucianism and Daoism), and goods across Eurasia. Eurasia- the two continents Europe and Asia.

**What goods were traded along the Silk Road?** Goods leaving China included: silk, paper, and pottery. Goods coming from the west were: sesame seeds and oil, metals, and precious stones to name a few.

**What ideas and beliefs were shared?** Confucianism (the idea of social duty) which spread to other countries and Daoism (a religion with priests, rituals, and volumes of collected writings).

**What is Cultural Diffusion?** Cultural diffusion is when people from other cultures/lands trade/share/learn ideas with others.

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**Activity:** Think about the different kinds of foods we eat. Can we make a list of all the different foods you've learned about and have eaten?

Ex. Mexican, Italian, Chinese, Thai, American, Japanese etc. How did we learn about all these? Did we have to travel to those countries to eat? No, through cultural diffusion, people have shared their foods, beliefs and customs with all of us to make our lives richer. Wouldn't it be boring if we only ate American food here in America? Aren't you glad we have all these wonderful foods to eat? What else do people learn and share from each other? TV programs, dances, holidays, customs, etc.

The people in the west and the Chinese did the same by using the Silk Road. Lots of ideas and customs were shared and learned. Do people still use the Silk Road

today? No, no we use planes, buses and cars. We don't walk hundreds of miles to trade good or ideas anymore. Now we use, our technology such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to name a few. The Silk Road became very important to China because it make China become very rich during the Han Dynasty as well as established cultural diffusion between the continents.

### **Where was the Silk Road?**

The Silk Road wasn't just one straight road. It was actually made up of many different routes that were connected. Most of the Silk Road was on land, and people travelled on it by caravan using horses and camels. A few of the routes were maritime (ocean) routes, and the only way to travel those parts was by boat. Show map of Silk Road. Discuss the geographic features and dangers that made traveling difficult.

**Activity:** Pass out map of China and have students map out the trade routes. Label the rest stops/towns/cities along the map.

Ask: What were some of the dangers of traveling on the Silk Road?

Answer: bandits, extreme weather, hunger/thirst, animals dying etc.

**Activity:** Show video clip of the Silk Road on United Streaming. Stop now and then to give students take notes and/or questions on what they learn. Share with partners what they wrote down. Share out to class and discuss and answer questions they may have.

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### **Review:**

1. What was the Silk Road? –trade routes from east to west (Eurasia).
2. What goods were traded along the route? Goods (paper, silk, glass, oil), ideas, technology and religion.



3. What possible dangers were faced by merchants? Bandits, weather, animals dying.
4. Name two different types of routes used for trade? Land and maritime.
5. What is cultural diffusion? The sharing/learning of ideas, customs.
6. Why was the SR important to China? It made China rich and connected China in east with the Roman Empire and Europe in the west.
7. Who were some of the people who used the Silk Road? Merchants, soldiers, traders, missionaries and pilgrims.
8. What was the Han Dynasty? A series of leaders from the same family that ruled China.

**Assessment:** See PDJ named: Assessment Day two.

Answer in detail each of the following answers. 5 points each.

1. Explain what the Silk Road was.
2. What was the importance of The Silk road? To whom was it important and why?
3. Describe how people traveled along this route.

**Extension:** ELA

- a. Write a diary entry entitled: One day on the Silk Road. Describe what you are transporting, by what means you are traveling, where are you going and your experiences.
- b. Research the making of silk. Write a report or make a poster describing the different steps involved. Present to class.
- c. Silk Road Day: bring something to trade in class (something you don't want/need anymore). Pretend you are traders from different lands. You may dress in native costume and speak your native language only.