

- Calligraphy, the skill of handwriting, is an art form in China. Many books about China demonstrate how Chinese words are formed from pictures. For example, the character for "water" looks like a splashing water droplet. Using large grid paper as a guide, students can practice the art of calligraphy.
- A class research project on comparative cultures can be built around the topic of famous walls in history. The Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall in England, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, the walls of Jericho, the walls of Great Zimbabwe in Africa and the Berlin Wall are just a start. Have students work in small groups to conduct research on "a great wall." They can make a model or draw a diagram and present their findings to the class. Discuss why walls are important in history. Why are there so many of them?
- Have students research the life of the philosopher Confucius and discuss his teachings. What lessons are taught? How do these teachings apply today?
- Chinese art and craftsmanship have been treasured by cultures worldwide. Check with museums in your community to see if they have exhibits or outreach programs with traditional objects made in China.

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [members.aol.com/Donnclass/Chinalife.html](http://members.aol.com/Donnclass/Chinalife.html)

Mrs. Donn's special web pages offer information for students and teachers about the daily lives of people in ancient China. Includes links to lesson plans for teachers.

- [sln.fi.edu/tfi/info/current/china.html](http://sln.fi.edu/tfi/info/current/china.html)

The Franklin Institute offers students "China: Ancient Arts and Sciences," based on an exhibit detailing important contributions from ancient China.

- [www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/Silk%20Rd.%20Maps.html](http://www.newton.mec.edu/Angier/DimSum/Silk%20Rd.%20Maps.html)

The Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection at the University of Texas at Austin has several maps of the Silk Road.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Bailey, Linda. *Adventures in Ancient China*. Kids Can Press, Toronto, Canada; 2003.
- Fisher, Leonard Everett. *The Gods and Goddesses of Ancient China*. Holiday House, New York, NY; 2003.
- Freedman, Russell. *Confucius: The Golden Rule*. Scholastic, Inc., New York, NY; 2002.
- Hinshaw Patent, Dorothy. *The Incredible Story of China's Buried Warriors*. Marshall Cavendish, Inc., New York, NY; 2002.

### TEACHER'S GUIDE CONSULTANT

Jan Bufkin  
6th Grade Teacher  
Westland Middle School  
Bethesda, MD

### TITLES IN THIS SERIES

- ANCIENT AEGEAN
- ANCIENT AFRICA
- ANCIENT CHINA
- ANCIENT EGYPT
- ANCIENT GREECE
- ANCIENT INCA
- ANCIENT MAYA
- ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA
- ANCIENT ROME

Teacher's Guides Included  
and Available Online at:

800-843-3620



Teacher's Guide and Program Copyright 1998 by Schlessinger Media,  
a division of Library Video Company

P.O. Box 580, Wynnewood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620

Executive Producer: Andrew Schlessinger

Program produced and directed by JWM Productions, Inc.

All rights reserved.



# ANCIENT CHINA

Grades 3-7

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting this program. The guide provides you with a summary of the program, pre-viewing and followup questions, activities, vocabulary and resources.

**Before Viewing:** Give students an overview of the program. Use the program summary to help provide this introduction. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

**After Viewing:** Review the program and vocabulary and discuss what students learned. Use follow-up questions and activities, and encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.



## Historical Overview

Spanning a period of over four thousand years, China is considered to be the world's oldest continuous civilization. The earliest Chinese dynasties were known only from myth and legend until recent archaeological discoveries have revealed evidence of a highly accomplished civilization that existed as early as 1700 BC.

This program highlights the first four Chinese dynasties, beginning with the Han Dynasty, founded in 206 BC, and continuing back in time through the Qin, Zhou and earliest Shang Dynasties. The roots of the civilization that gave the world paper and printing and built the Great Wall are still being unearthed by archaeologists working in China today.

## Vocabulary

**civilization** — A society that has achieved a high level of culture in government, religion, education, technology, art and science.

**archaeologist** — A scientist who studies past cultures by analyzing their remains.

**dynasty** — A line of rulers who passed authority down through generations.

**emperor** — The supreme ruler of an empire.

**terra-cotta** — A baked clay material used for statues, pots and buildings.

**Mongols** — A nomadic people from Mongolia, a country north of China.

**Confucius** — A Chinese philosopher and scholar born in 551 BC who taught respect for others and the importance of good citizenship.

**calligraphy** — The art of handwriting.

**bronze** — A metal made of copper and tin.

**silk** — A rich fabric woven from the cocoons of silkworms.

**porcelain** — A hard, white ceramic ware commonly known as china.

**jade** — A green, semi-precious stone crafted in jewelry and objects of art.

**lacquer** — A hard, shiny coating on furniture and fine objects.

**scholar** — A highly-educated person.

**merchant** — One who makes a living by buying and selling goods.

**peasant** — A poor farmer or worker.

**acupuncture** — Method of treating pain or illness by inserting small needles into the body.

## Timeline

c.1700 BC - c.1050 BC	Shang Dynasty (writing, silk, bronze developed)
c.1050 BC - 221 BC	Zhou Dynasty (Confucius born 551 BC)
221 BC - 206 BC	Qin Dynasty (China unified; Great Wall is begun)
206 BC - AD 220	Han Dynasty (Silk Road flourishes)

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Locate China on a map of the Eastern Hemisphere. Then locate Europe and Africa. Ask students to conjecture when and how people of Europe and Africa first realized that the civilization of China existed to the east. Discuss how ancient cultures first made contact through trading goods.
- Though vast in size and population, China is an isolated country which has had little direct contact with the outside world. Ask students to identify on the map several physical features which have kept China isolated. Then have students work in small groups to trace a route that merchants might have taken to reach China from the west. How might they have overcome the obstacles along the way?
- China's many contributions to world civilization, from paper, printing, the compass and even the noodle, were transported by camel caravans along the Silk Road from China. As students watch the video, ask them to note the numerous inventions made by the Chinese that have spread around the world.
- Point out to students that the video will take them back in time from the fourth dynasty, the Han Dynasty, to the earliest Chinese dynasty, the Shang.

## Focus Questions

1. What is meant when historians say that China is the world's oldest "continuous" civilization?
2. How is Chinese history organized?
3. Why was the emperor's role important in China?
4. Name some of the goods traded along China's Silk Road.
5. Describe the terra-cotta army of Emperor Qin. What is amazing about this discovery?
6. What were some of the accomplishments of Emperor Qin?
7. Describe the construction of the Great Wall during the Qin Dynasty. Why did Emperor Qin have the wall built?
8. How was China ruled during the Zhou Dynasty? How did the system of rule change under the Qin Dynasty? *(Continued)*

9. What was the role of the scholar during the Zhou Dynasty? Who was China's most famous scholar and what did he teach?
10. What major archaeological discovery shed light on the Shang Dynasty?
11. Describe the process of bronze making which developed during the Shang Dynasty. How was bronze used by the Chinese?
12. What was life like for a boy in ancient China? For a girl?
13. Much of the food that was eaten in ancient China is still eaten today. Name some of these foods and the techniques that are used for cooking.
14. What is especially challenging about learning to read and write in Chinese?
15. How was the kite used in ancient China?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Discuss some of the significant inventions that the Chinese have contributed to world civilization. How might life have changed for the ancient Chinese as a result of these inventions?
- Because it has remained isolated, China has sometimes been considered a land of mystery. China's earliest history is veiled in myth and legend even to the Chinese. What discoveries are archaeologists uncovering about ancient China?

## Follow-up Activities

- "Made in China." Trade routes were instrumental in facilitating the sharing of ideas and inventions around the world. A survey of products in students' homes can tell them a lot about the goods that cultures around the world are exporting today. Give students this task: with an adult's permission, check the labels on a variety of items in your home (or room) to find where the products were made. Clothing, shoes, foods, electronics, toys and games, books, cars and ornamental objects are just some of the categories. Make a list of the types of products you find and the countries where they are made. Share your list with the class. What can we learn about a culture from the goods it produces? What can we learn about people from the products they buy? What items are made in China today? Are they similar or different from ones made in ancient China?
- Create a timeline of China's dynasties. Have the class determine the mathematical scale to be used. Students can work in pairs to create a section of the timeline, label it and illustrate it with important events and inventions in Chinese history. Then connect the sections on the classroom wall.

*(Continued on Page 5)*