

Geography of The Silk Roads Web Quest

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<http://virtuallabs.stanford.edu/silkroad/SilkRoad.html>

Click on the links underlined below to investigate the Silk Road. Answer the questions as you navigate the maps and activities.

Explore the Silk Road Maps

Zhang Qian was one of the first people to travel along the Silk Road. Zhang departed from the capital of the Han Dynasty with a caravan of 100 men. His original quest was to form political alliances with other nomadic tribes, specifically the Yuezhi, who were located on the western side of the Taklamakan Desert.

Although Zhang spent much of his journey in captivity due to hostile encounters, he was eventually able to bring back important diplomatic information and knowledge about how other tribes survived. He also brought back products like alfalfa seeds and strong horses. Most valuable to the Han Dynasty though was the beginning of trade relationships between China and Western Civilizations.

1. What major cities or trading centers did Zhang Qian travel through? List all major cities.
2. What types of climatic regions was Zhang Qian exposed to during his journey? How might they have affected his journey? (Be specific ☺)

Xuan Zang was a Chinese Buddhist Monk, scholar, traveler and translator. He studied Sacred Books of Chinese literature as a small child. As a boy he was ordained as a Buddhist priest to the Temple of Heavenly Radiance in Hangchow. Soon thereafter he was transferred to the Temple of Great Learning in Chang-an, and joined a community of monks who devoted their lives to the translation of the Sacred Books from India.

Xuan Zang conceived a bold plan to travel to India to study original Buddhist scriptures and bring back the sacred books. He traveled over land, along the Silk Road west toward India and eventually returned to China to introduce new schools of Buddhist thought. His detailed account provided the first reliable information about distant countries, terrain and customs.

3. List three possible barriers Xuan Zang might have experienced during his journey from China to India and why they might have been a barrier.

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4. What modern day political borders would Xuan Zang had to have crossed to make his journey? Why is this significant? (Think about cultural barriers that might have been present before modern day borders)

Sights Along the Silk Roads

5. Pick two pieces of art and/or architecture to learn more about - explain when and where each piece originated, its cultural importance and its legacy.

6. What is the most significant difference you noticed between the art and architecture that originated in Europe compared to art and architecture that originated in Asia along the Silk Road?

Silk Road Timeline

7. Record 5 important details from the timeline...

3000 BCE: _____

First Century BCE: _____

1271 – 1297 CE: _____

Mid 1300's: _____

1905: _____

8. Explain in **three (3) sentences** how the Silk Road impacted societies on the east and the west of Eurasia.