

Week Four: Tang Dynasty and the Silk Road

Weekly Focus: Response with Evidence

Weekly Skill: Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences

Lesson Summary: This week students will explore the Silk Road, with specific attention to how it connected Old World cultures to each other. Students will practice reading a map, researching, and responding to a primary source.

Materials Needed: projector, computers and internet access, Tang Dynasty assignment sheet, Silk Road ensemble music video, Silk Road Map and Timeline web site, Silk Road Introduction Video

Objectives: Students will be able to...

- Read a map
- Research facts and complete a timeline
- Understand what the Silk Road was and be able to infer and explain its importance
- Read a primary text and apply its ideas to a modern context
- Respond with evidence to a primary source

Common Core Standards Addressed: RH.11-12.1, RH.11-12.2, RH.11-12.7, WHST.11-12.1

Notes: Because this is the Responding with Evidence week of our CARE model, remind students of the importance of providing evidence to support their opinions.

Week Four: Tang Dynasty and the Silk Road

Activities:

Warm-Up: Silk Road Introduction

Time: 10 minutes

When students come in, have this question written on the board: "What is the benefit of different cultures coming together?" Have students write on this for the first few minutes of class and then choose a few students to share their answers.

(As students write, you may choose to play the music video of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road group which exemplifies musical styles and cultures coming together typical of this route.)

Activity 1: Silk Road Introduction

Time: 50 minutes

- 1) Explain to students that during the Tang Dynasty of China different cultures really began to connect with each other and food, music, and beliefs, began to be shared on a large scale. One way in which this happened was through the "Silk Road." Cultures were able to benefit from this emerging global culture much as we benefit from intersecting cultures today.
- 2) Project the Silk Road map onto the wall. Click on the tabs at the top. Together as a class, see if you can identify a) Five languages spoken along the Silk Route and b) Five religious beliefs held by people through whose lands the Silk Route passed.
- 3) **Video Questions:** Show the video about the Silk Road to students. Before you show it, go over the chart with questions. Have students try to fill out the chart as they watch. Finally, have students come together in groups to compare notes and then, as a class, use answers to write a full class chart.
- 4) **Timeline:** If you have computers, have students go to the Silk Road Timeline and find 3 events to fill out on their worksheet timeline (another option would be to print various events and hand them out to students). Create a larger timeline on the board and use it to put together a full-class Silk Road Timeline.

10 minute break

Activity 2: Responding with Evidence Activity

Time: 40 minutes

- Remind students that today we are focusing on "Responding with Evidence" in our CARE model. Discuss again why using evidence to support our opinions is important.
- Have students read Emperor Taizong's account of what makes a good ruler and then individually or in pairs answer the questions beneath it. Remind students that they will be asked to use the skill of "inference." Because they cannot directly ask the Emperor his opinion, they will have to draw conclusions of what his opinion might be based on the evidence that is provided to them.
- Have students share their answers with a partner. Share out volunteers as a class.

Wrap-Up: Essential Question

Time: 10 minutes

Returning to this unit's essential question, "Why do we tell stories?" ask students the following question: On the Silk Route, many different objects were traded between countries. In what way might an object tell a story?

Have students write down an answer to this question on a scrap piece of paper; then come

Week Four: Tang Dynasty and the Silk Road

together as a class to discuss.

Extra Work/Homework

Have students research the Tang Dynasty and write a one paragraph summary of it.

Differentiated Instruction/ELL Accommodation Suggestions	Activity
Help beginning students come up with a leader that they would like to talk about before they begin writing	Responding with Evidence
Have Advanced students write their own paragraph without using the template.	Responding with Evidence

Online Resources:

- 1) [Tang Dynasty](#)
- 2) [Silk Road](#)

Suggested Teacher Readings: [The Silk Road Project](#)

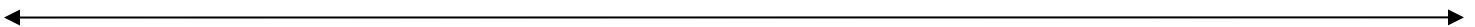
THE SILK ROAD

Step One: Video Questions

<p>Who? Who used the Silk Road?</p>	
<p>What? What was the Silk Road? What was traded on it?</p>	
<p>Where? Where did the Silk Road go?</p>	
<p>Why? Why was the Silk Road considered so important?</p>	

Step Two, Group Activity: Silk Road Timeline

Go to the Silk Road Timeline online. Your teacher will direct you to this. Next, choose **THREE** events from the timeline that seem especially important to you. Add them to the timeline below, and in your own words, write a description of the events.



Week Four: Tang Dynasty and the Silk Road

Step Three: Responding to a Primary Source

**Excerpts from Emperor Taizong on Effective Government
 How a Ruler Should Act**

(taken from <http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/>)

A country cannot be a country without people and a ruler cannot be a ruler without a country. When the ruler looks as lofty and firm as a mountain peak and as pure, bright, and illuminating as the sun and the moon, the people will admire and respect him. He must broaden his will so as to be able to embrace both Heaven and earth and must regulate his heart so as to be able to make just decisions. He cannot expand his territory without majesty and virtue; he cannot soothe and protect his people without compassion and kindness. He comforts his relations with benevolence, treats his officials with courtesy, honors his ancestors with filial respect, and receives his subordinates with thoughtfulness. Having disciplined himself, he practices virtue and righteousness diligently. This is how a ruler should act.

About: The passage above was written by an Emperor during the Tang Dynasty. Li Shimin reigned as Taizong, second emperor of the Tang dynasty (618-907), from 626 until his death in 649. An energetic ruler, Tang Taizong had played a major part in the military campaigns that brought his father (Li Yuan, Tang Gaozu, r. 618-626) to the throne as the first emperor of the Tang dynasty. Having eliminated his two competitors for the throne (his brothers Li Jiancheng and Li Yuanji) in an ambush at the capital city's Xuanwu Gate in 624, Li Shimin forced his father into retirement in 626 to take the throne for himself. As the second emperor of the Tang dynasty, Li Shimin gave shape to the administrative structure of the empire. The text was written in 648, near the end of his reign, and was meant to serve as advice to his heirs.

1) Fill out the chart below

EMPEROR TAIZONG BELIEVES THAT A GOOD LEADER IS SOMEONE WHO:
•
•
•
•

Complete the sentences:

1. Emperor Taizong believes that a good leader _____

_____.

2. Based on this criteria, I believe that _____ is/is not a good leader.

Think about a current leader (President, pastor, teacher, etc.).

3. The reason that this person is/is not a good leader is _____

_____.

4. An example of this is _____

_____.

5. This is why _____ is/is not a good leader.

Write a One-Paragraph Response:

Now that you have brainstormed answers to the above questions, use this information to formulate a one-paragraph response to the following question:

Based on the criteria established in the reading passage, do you believe that Emperor Taizong would consider the person you chose as an effective leader? Why or why not? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.