

# The Qin and Han Dynasties

## Get Ready to Read!

### What's the Connection?

Each of China's early dynasties was led by rulers who were very different. In this section, you will see how the Qin and Han dynasties differed because of their rulers.

### Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Qin Shihuangdi used harsh methods to unify and defend China. (page 241)
- Developments during the Han dynasty improved life for all Chinese. (page 244)
- The Silk Road carried Chinese goods as far as Greece and Rome. (page 246)
- Unrest in China helped Buddhism to spread. (page 248)

### Locating Places

Guangzhou (GWAHNG•JOH)  
Silk Road  
Luoyang (loo•WOH•YAHNG)

### Meeting People

**Qin Shihuangdi** (CHIHN SHEE•hwahng•dee)

**Liu Bang** (lee•OO BAHNG)

**Han Wudi** (HAHN WOO•DEE)

### Building Your Vocabulary

**acupuncture** (A•kyuh•PUHNGK•chuhr)

### Reading Strategy

#### Determining Cause and Effect

Complete a diagram like the one below showing the inventions of the Han dynasty and the resulting impact on society.

Invention	→	Effect
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	→	<input type="text"/>



## When & Where?



200 B.C.

202 B.C.

Liu Bang founds Han dynasty

A.D. 1

c. A.D. 100

Silk Road established

A.D. 200

A.D. 190

Rebel armies attack Han capital

# Emperor Qin Shihuangdi

**Main Idea** Qin Shihuangdi used harsh methods to unify and defend China.

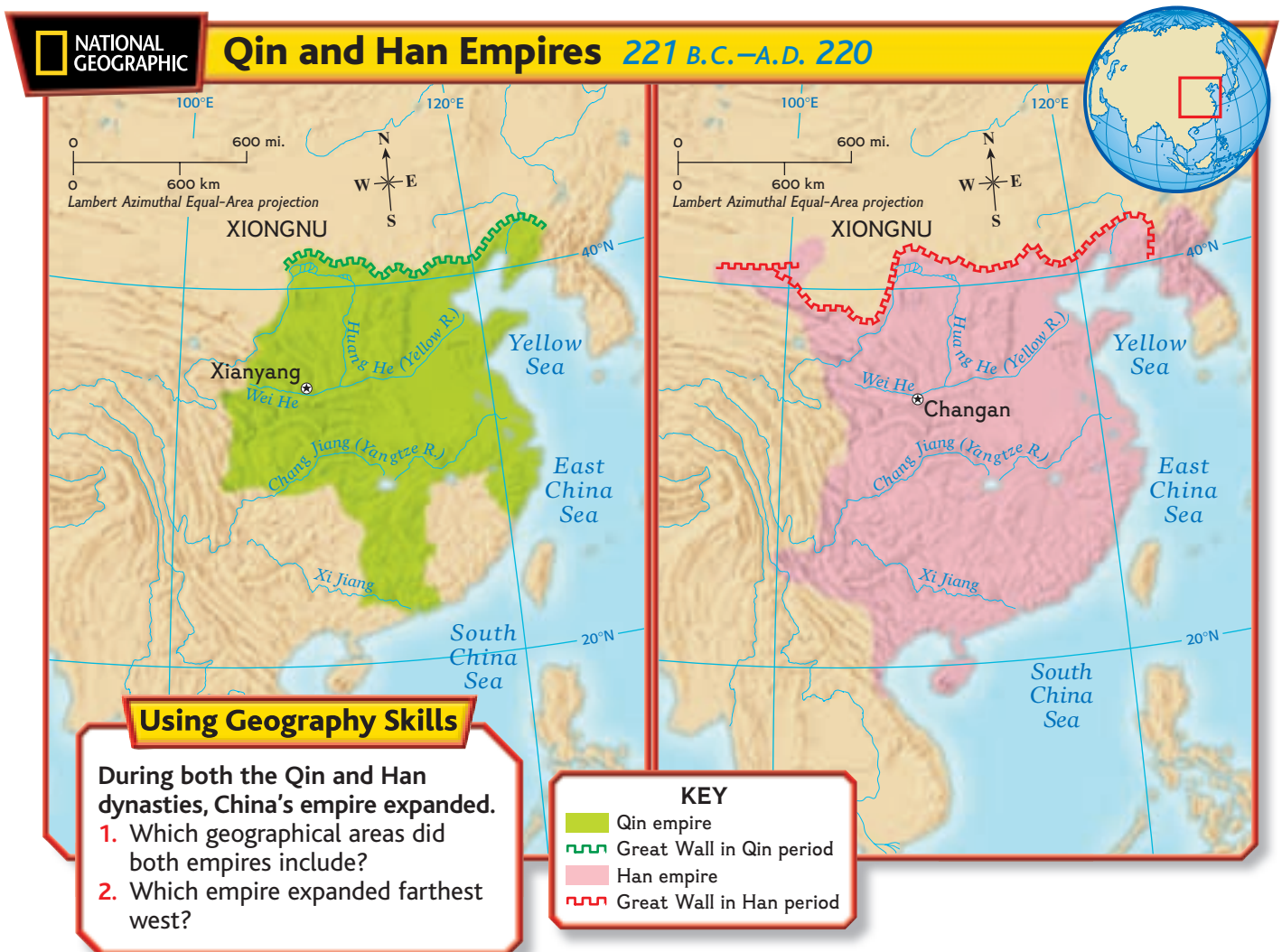
**Reading Focus** Imagine your city or state without any roads. How would people get from one place to another? Read to find out how a Chinese ruler used roads and canals to unite China.

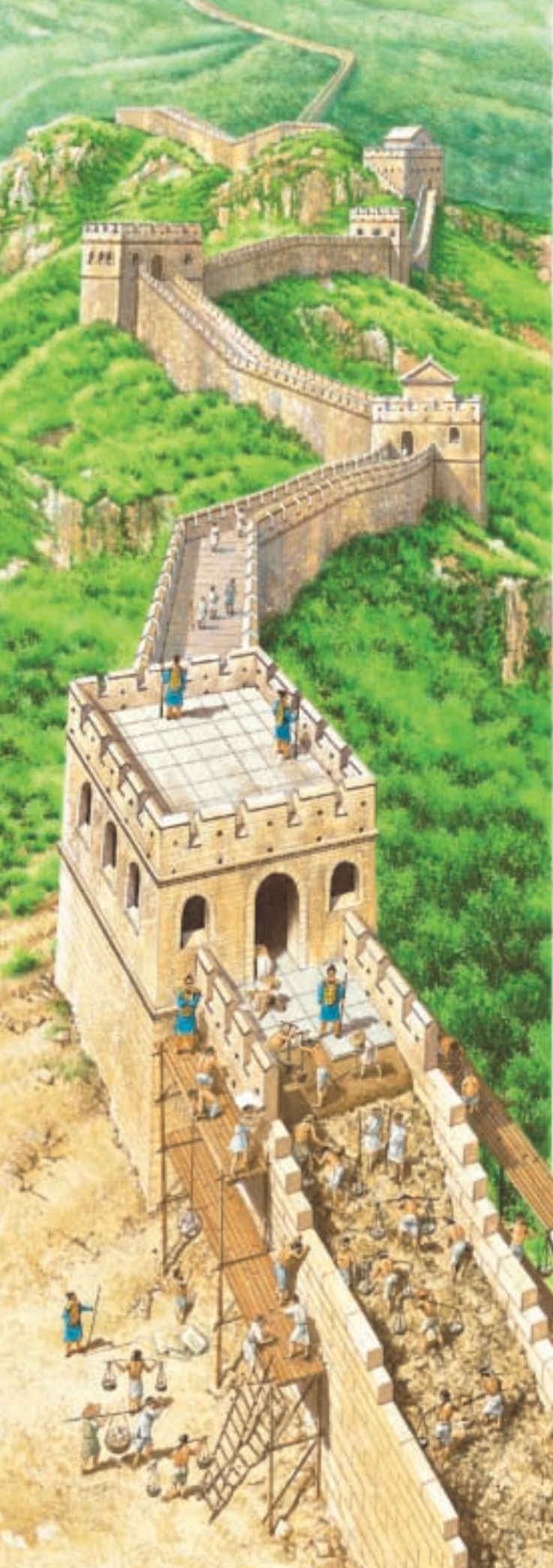
You have read about the problems in China from about 400 B.C. to 200 B.C. The rulers of powerful local states fought one another and ignored the Zhou kings. One of these states was called Qin. Its ruler took over neighboring states one by one. In 221 B.C. the Qin ruler declared himself **Qin Shihuangdi** (CHIHN SHEE • hwahng • dee),

which means “the First Qin Emperor.” The Qin ruler made changes in China’s government that would last for 2,000 years.

**A Powerful Ruler** Qin based his rule on the ideas of Legalism. He had everyone who opposed him punished or killed. Books opposing his views were publicly burned. Qin made the central government stronger than ever before. He appointed government officials, called censors, to make sure government officials did their jobs.

Second in power to the central government were provinces and counties. Under Zhou kings, officials who ran these areas passed on their posts to sons or relatives. Under Qin, only he could fill these posts.






Qin Shihuangdi unified China. He created one currency, or type of money, to be used throughout the empire. He also ordered the building of roads and a huge canal. The canal connected the Chang Jiang in central China to what is today the city of **Guangzhou** (GWAHNG • JOH) in southern China. He used the canal to ship supplies to his troops in far-off territories.

**The Great Wall** Northern China was bordered by the vast Gobi. Nomads, people who move from place to place with herds of animals, lived in the Gobi. The Chinese knew them as the Xiongnu (SYEHN • NOO). The Xiongnu were masters at fighting on horseback. They often attacked Chinese farms and villages. Several Chinese rulers in the north built walls to keep out the Xiongnu.

Qin Shihuangdi forced farmers to leave their fields and work on connecting and strengthening the walls. The result was the Great Wall of China, built with stone, sand, and piled rubble. However, Qin did not build the wall that we know today. It was built 1,500 years later.

**Why Did People Rebel?** Many Chinese viewed Qin Shihuangdi as a cruel leader. Aristocrats were angry because he reduced their power. Scholars hated him for burning their writings. Farmers hated him for forcing them to build roads and the Great Wall. Four years after the emperor died in 210 B.C., the people overthrew his dynasty. Civil war followed, and a new dynasty soon arose.

 **Reading Check Explain** Why did Qin face little opposition during most of his reign?

◀ This artwork shows the Great Wall many years after the reign of Qin Shihuangdi. Most of the wall built by Qin was made of stone and rubble, and was located north of the Great Wall we see today. Little remains of Qin's wall. **Who was the wall meant to keep out?**

# Biography

## QIN SHIHUANGDI

c. 259–210 B.C.

At the age 13, Ying Zheng became the leader of the Chinese state of Qin. The state was already very powerful because of Zheng's father, the previous ruler. Its government and military were well organized. With the help of his generals, young Zheng defeated Qin's six rival states. By 221 B.C., he had united all of the Chinese states under his rule. To mark a new beginning for China and to show his supremacy, Zheng gave himself the title Qin Shihuangdi—"The First Qin Emperor."

Qin Shihuangdi energetically went to work organizing his country. He divided the land into 36 districts, each with its own governor and a representative who reported directly to him. He made laws and taxes uniform throughout the country. He also standardized weights and measurements. Throughout China, the emperor had his achievements inscribed on stone tablets.

Qin Shihuangdi did strengthen and organize China, but many people disliked him because of his harsh laws and punishments. Many people also disliked how he spent lavish amounts of money to build palaces and a gigantic tomb for himself. He had an entire lifelike army—over 6,000 soldiers and horses—built of clay and placed in the tomb.



▲ Qin Shihuangdi

**"I have brought order to the mass of beings."**  
—Qin Shihuangdi



▲ Part of the terra-cotta army found in Qin Shihuangdi's tomb

### Then and Now

Why do you think modern historians disagree in their evaluation of Qin Shihuangdi's leadership?

# The Han Dynasty

**Main Idea** Developments during the Han dynasty improved life for all Chinese.

**Reading Focus** How much time do you spend studying for tests? Find out why some Chinese people spent years studying for one special test.

In 202 B.C. **Liu Bang** (lee•OO BAHNG) founded the Han dynasty. Liu Bang, who was once a peasant, became a military leader and defeated his rivals. He declared himself Han Gaozu—“Exalted Emperor of Han.” Although Han Gaozu threw out the harsh policies of the Qin dynasty, he continued to use censors and also divided the empire into provinces and counties.

**What Was the Civil Service?** The Han reached its peak under the leadership of **Han Wudi** (HAHN WOO•DEE), which means “Martial Emperor of Han.” He ruled from



▲ This painting shows students taking a civil service examination. **Why did the civil service system favor rich job seekers?**

141 B.C. to 87 B.C. Because Wudi wanted talented people to fill government posts, job seekers had to take long, difficult tests to qualify for openings in the bureaucracy. Those with the highest scores got the jobs.

In time, Wudi’s tests became the civil service examinations. This system for choosing officials remained part of Chinese civilization for 2,000 years. The system was supposed to help anyone with the right skills get a job with the government. However, it actually favored the rich. Only wealthy families could afford to educate their sons for the difficult exams.

Students preparing for these tests learned law, history, and the teachings of Confucius. They began to memorize the works of Confucius at age seven. After many years of schooling, the students took their civil service examinations. Only one in five passed. Those who failed taught school, took jobs as assistants to officials, or were supported by their families.

**The Chinese Empire Grows** A large bureaucracy was needed to rule the rapidly growing empire. The population had grown from about 20 million under Han Gaozu to more than 60 million under Han Wudi.

Because farmers had to divide their lands among more and more sons, by the middle of the Han Dynasty the average farmer owned only about one acre of land. With so little land, farm families could not raise enough to live. As a result, many sold their land to aristocrats and became tenant farmers. Tenant farmers work on land that is owned by someone else and pay rent in crops. The aristocrats now owned thousands of acres, but peasants remained trapped in poverty.

China’s empire grew in size as well as in population. Han armies added lands to the south and pushed Chinese borders westward. The Han dynasty also made the

# Linking Past & Present

## Papermaking

**THEN** The Chinese were the first people to make paper. The oldest piece of paper found in China dates from the first century B.C. Papermakers soaked tree bark, hemp, and rags in water and pounded it into pulp. They lowered a bamboo screen into a vat of the pulp and then lifted it out. It held a thin sheet of pulp which dried into a single sheet of paper.



▲ A modern artist demonstrates an ancient way of making paper.

▼ Modern papermaking



**NOW** Papermaking today is a huge international industry. Most paper is made in paper mills by machines, but the basic process is the same. Instead of tree bark, rags, and hemp, most paper today is made from wood pulp. *Why do you think some modern artists continue to make paper using pulp and a frame?*

country more secure. After Wudi's armies drove back the Xiongnu—the nomads to the north—the Chinese lived in peace for almost 150 years.

During this period of peace, new forms of Chinese literature appeared. Scholars and historians wrote new histories of current events and made copies of old literature. The focus of art also changed during the Han dynasty. Wealthy families commissioned products made of the best quality silk and wall carvings featuring scenes of everyday life.

**An Era of Inventions** New inventions during the Han dynasty helped Chinese workers produce more than ever. Millers used newly invented waterwheels to grind more grain, and miners used new iron drill bits to mine more salt. Ironworkers invented steel. Paper, another Han invention, was used by government officials to record a growing amount of information.

Chinese medicine also improved under the Han. Doctors discovered that certain foods prevented disease. They used herbs to cure illnesses and eased pain by sticking

thin needles into patients' skin. This treatment is known as **acupuncture** (A • kyuh • PUHNGK • chuhr).

The Chinese also invented the rudder and a new way to move the sails of ships. These changes allowed ships to sail into the wind for the first time. Chinese merchant ships could now travel to the islands of Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean. As a result, China established trade as far away as India and the Mediterranean Sea.

**Reading Check Explain** How did China's empire increase in size during the Han dynasty?

## The Silk Road




**Main Idea** The Silk Road carried Chinese goods as far as Greece and Rome.

**Reading Focus** Many of the things we buy today are made in China. Read to learn how goods made in China long ago made it all the way to Europe.

Emperor Han Wudi ordered a general named Zhang Qian (JAHNG CHYEHN) to explore areas west of China. Zhang was sent on this mission to find allies for China against its enemies, especially the Xiongnu



## Four Chinese Dynasties

	SHANG	ZHOU	QIN	HAN
<b>When</b>	1750–1045 B.C.	1045–256 B.C.	221–206 B.C.	202 B.C.–A.D. 220
<b>Important Leaders</b>	Numerous kings with large armies and control over the land; ruled from capital city of Anyang	 Wu	 Qin Shihuangdi	 Liu Bang
<b>Main Ideas and Accomplishments</b>	Developed social classes that included farmers, merchants, aristocrats, and royal family	Longest-lasting dynasty in Chinese history; established Mandate of Heaven	Strengthened central government; created single monetary system	Population and landmass grew under Han; opened China to trade and commerce by building Silk Road
<b>Influences on Chinese Culture</b>	Influenced Chinese religion and culture; created Chinese written language	Developed irrigation and flood-control systems to help farmers grow more crops	Introduced use of censors to check on government officials; Qin built the first Great Wall to keep out invaders	Created government's civil service examination; major inventions: steel, paper, acupuncture, advanced sea travel

### Understanding Charts

The four dynasties of early China were separated by brief periods of unrest.

- Under which dynasty was a single monetary system put in place?
- Evaluate** Which dynasty do you think contributed the most to Chinese culture? Why?

to the north. After a journey of about 13 years, Zhang returned to China. He failed to find allies, but he told of a mighty empire to the west with large cities full of people “who cut their hair short, wear embroidered clothes, and ride in very small chariots.” Zhang was describing the Roman Empire. He had also discovered another kingdom, perhaps in Kazakhstan, where there were horses of exceptional strength and size.

Emperor Wudi was delighted to hear this because the cavalry of the Xiongnu gave them a great advantage over his army, which was mostly infantry. The emperor

encouraged trade to get these horses. The result was the **Silk Road**, a large network of trade routes stretching 4,000 miles (6,436 km) from western China to southwest Asia.

Merchants used camels to carry their goods across deserts and mountains to central Asia. From there Arabs carried the goods to the Mediterranean Sea. The trip over the Silk Road was expensive because it was difficult and dangerous. Merchants had to pay taxes to many kingdoms as they moved the goods east and west. For this reason, they carried only high-priced goods such as silk, spices, tea, and porcelain.

 **Reading Check Conclude** Why were only expensive goods carried on the Silk Road?



## Major Changes in China

**Main Idea** Unrest in China helped Buddhism to spread.

**Reading Focus** What do you do when you feel frightened or unsafe? Read to find out how those feelings triggered the spread of Buddhism from India to China.

As you read in Chapter 6, Buddhism began in India, but it soon spread to other countries as well. Merchants and teachers from India brought Buddhism to China during the A.D. 100s. At first, only a few merchants and scholars were interested in the new religion. In time, however, Buddhism became very popular. One of the most important reasons that the Chinese people began to believe in Buddhism was the fall of the Han dynasty.

The Han emperors after Wudi were weak and foolish. As a result, the central government lost respect and power. At the

same time, as you read earlier, the aristocrats began grabbing more land and wealth. Dishonest officials and greedy aristocrats caused unrest among the farmers.

Wars, rebellions, and plots against the emperor put an end to the Han dynasty. In A.D. 190 a rebel army attacked the Han capital, **Luoyang** (loo•WOH•YAHNG). By A.D. 220, China had plunged into civil war. To make the situation worse, the northern nomads invaded the country.

The collapse of the government and the beginning of the civil war frightened many Chinese. They felt unsafe. Buddhist ideas helped people cope with the stress and their fear. Even the followers of other religions found Buddhism attractive. Followers of Confucius and Daoists admired Buddhist ideas. By the 400s, Buddhism had become popular in China.

**Reading Check** Identify What groups in China were the first to adopt Buddhism?

## Section 3 Review

History  online

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### Reading Summary

#### Review the Main Ideas

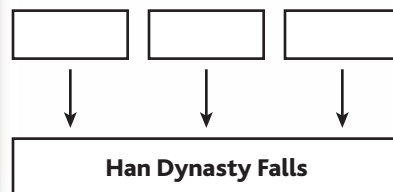
- The short-lived Qin dynasty helped to unify China.
- During the Han dynasty, people began taking tests for government jobs. New inventions, such as the waterwheel and paper, were created.
- The Silk Road was an important trade route that linked China to the West.
- As the Han dynasty lost power, many Chinese became followers of Buddhism.

### What Did You Learn?

1. Why did Qin Shihuangdi have the Great Wall built?
2. What were civil service examinations and why were they created?
4. **Geography Skills** What barriers did merchants who used the Silk Road have to cross?
5. **Explain** How did Qin Shihuangdi make China's central government stronger?

#### Critical Thinking

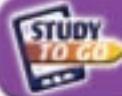
3. **Cause and Effect** Draw a diagram to show the factors that caused the Han dynasty to fall.



6. **Analyze** Why did the Qin dynasty fall?
7. **Descriptive Writing** Zhang Qian wrote that Romans had short hair, wore embroidered clothes, and rode in chariots. Name three things that he might have written about people in the United States after seeing them for the first time.

# Chapter 7

# Reading Review



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## Section 1 China's First Civilizations

### Vocabulary

dynasty  
aristocrat  
pictograph  
ideograph  
bureaucracy  
mandate  
Dao

### Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Rivers, mountains, and deserts helped shape China's civilization. (page 225)
- Rulers known as the Shang became powerful because they controlled land and had strong armies. (page 226)
- Chinese rulers claimed that the Mandate of Heaven gave them the right to rule. (page 229)



Bronze bowl and ladle  
from Zhou dynasty

## Section 2 Life in Ancient China

### Vocabulary

social class  
filial piety  
Confucianism  
Daoism  
Legalism

### Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Chinese society had three main social classes: landowning aristocrats, farmers, and merchants. (page 233)
- Three Chinese philosophies, Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism, grew out of a need for order. (page 235)



Laozi

## Section 3 The Qin and Han Dynasties

### Vocabulary

acupuncture

### Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Qin Shihuangdi used harsh methods to unify and defend China. (page 241)
- Developments during the Han dynasty improved life for all Chinese. (page 244)
- The Silk Road carried Chinese goods as far as Greece and Rome. (page 246)
- Unrest in China helped Buddhism to spread. (page 248)

# Assessment and Activities

## Review Vocabulary

Match the words with the definitions below.

- \_\_\_ 1. dynasty  
 \_\_\_ 2. aristocrat  
 \_\_\_ 3. bureaucracy  
 \_\_\_ 4. mandate  
 \_\_\_ 5. social class  
 \_\_\_ 6. filial piety  
 \_\_\_ 7. acupuncture  
 \_\_\_ 8. Daoism  
 \_\_\_ 9. Confucianism
- a. right to command  
 b. line of rulers in the same family  
 c. member of the upper class whose wealth is based on land  
 d. The ideas of \_\_\_ included a duty to participate in government.  
 e. appointed government officials  
 f. head of family honored by other members  
 g. medical treatment using thin needles  
 h. people with a similar position in society  
 i. The teachings of Laozi are the basis of \_\_\_.

## Review Main Ideas

### Section 1 • China's First Civilizations

10. What geographical features shaped China's civilizations?  
 11. Why did the Shang rulers become powerful?

### Section 2 • Life in Ancient China

12. What were the three main classes in Chinese society?  
 13. Identify three Chinese philosophies and the reason they emerged.

### Section 3 • The Qin and Han Dynasties

14. How did developments during the Han dynasty affect the Chinese people?  
 15. What was the purpose of the Silk Road?

## Critical Thinking

16. **Contrast** How is the ancient Chinese writing system different from cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing?  
 17. **Describe** How did Shang artisans create bronze urns?  
 18. **Analyze** How is Daoism the opposite of Confucianism in some ways?

Review

Reading Skill

Text Structure

## Headings and Punctuation

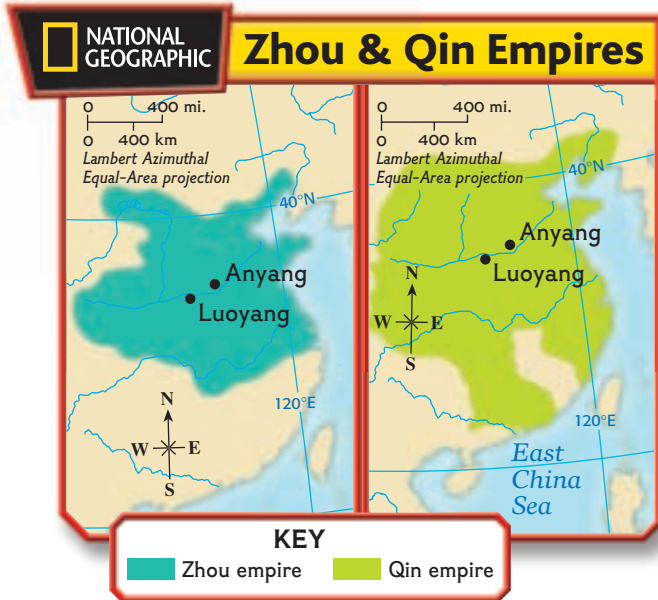
19. Read each of the headings below. Three could be subheads in a chapter about ancient China. Which one would most likely be the main head?  
 a. The Ideas of Confucius  
 b. Daoist Beliefs  
 c. Chinese Philosophy  
 d. Hanfeizi
20. What would be a good main head for these subheads: Papermaking, Civil Service Examinations, Acupuncture?  
 e. The Rise of the Zhou Dynasty  
 f. Inventions of the Qin Dynasty  
 g. Developments of the Han Dynasty  
 h. Life in the Shang Dynasty

To review this skill, see pages 222–223.

## Geography Skills

Study the map below and answer the following questions.

21. **Human/Environment Interaction** Which dynasty controlled the most land?
22. **Location** In what direction did the Qin dynasty expand the most?
23. **Analyze** How do you think the East China Sea affected expansion?



## Read to Write

24. **Expository Writing** Imagine you are planning a trip on the Silk Road and you need someone to go with you. Write a want ad describing the type of person you need. Explain what will be expected of that person on the trip.
25. **Using Your FOLDABLES™** Choose one person that you included in your foldable. Write a list of 10 questions that you would ask that person in an interview. Exchange lists with a partner and play the role of the person being interviewed.

## Using Technology

26. **Internet Research** The Chinese built the Great Wall of China to protect themselves. Use the Internet and your local library to research ways other countries have protected themselves from enemies. Describe at least two examples to your classmates.

## Building Citizenship Skills

27. **Plan a Debate** With your class, plan and participate in a three-way debate. Divide into three teams. One team will represent the Legalists, one will represent followers of Confucius, and one will represent Daoists. As a team, research each philosophy. Record key points on note cards for easy reference. Begin the debate by asking the question “Which philosophy is best reflected in a democratic society such as that of the United States?”

## Primary Source

### Analyze

The main ideas of Daoism are explained in a book titled *Dao De Jing* (The Way of the Dao). This passage describes the Daoist position against violence.

“When leading by the way of the Tao [Dao], abominate [hate] the use of force, for it causes resistance, and loss of strength. . . .

Achieve results but not through violence, for it is against the natural way, and damages both others’ and one’s own true self. . . .

The wise leader achieves results, but does not glory in them . . . and does not boast of them.

He knows that boasting is not the natural way, and that he who goes against that way, will fail in his endeavours.”

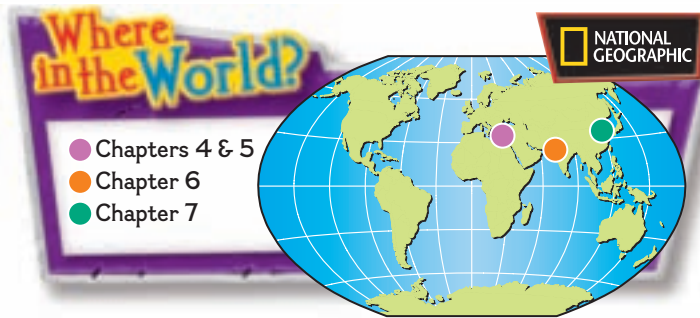
—“A Caveat Against Violence,”  
*The Tao Te Ching*, Stan Rosenthal, trans.




## DBQ Document-Based Questions

28. According to Daoist thought, what is the result of using force or violence?
29. What do you think the following statement means?  
“The wise leader achieves results, but does not glory in them.”

## Comparing Civilizations

Compare the civilizations that you have read about by reviewing the information below. Can you see how the people of these civilizations helped to build the world we live in today?



	<b>Ancient Greece</b> <i>Chapters 4 &amp; 5</i>	<b>Early India</b> <i>Chapter 6</i>	<b>Early China</b> <i>Chapter 7</i>
<b>Where did these civilizations develop?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On Mediterranean islands and the Balkan Peninsula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Indus River valley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Huang He valley</li> </ul>
<b>Who were some important people in these civilizations?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homer, c. 750 B.C.</li> <li>Pericles, c. 495–429 B.C.</li> <li>Socrates, c. 470–399 B.C.</li> <li>Alexander the Great, c. 356–323 B.C.</li> </ul> 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Siddhartha Gautama, c. 563–483 B.C.</li> <li>Chandragupta Maurya, ruled c. 321–298 B.C.</li> <li>Asoka, ruled c. 273–232 B.C.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wu Wang, ruled c. 1045–1043 B.C.</li> <li>Confucius, 551–479 B.C.</li> <li>Qin Shihuangdi, ruled 221–210 B.C.</li> <li>Liu Bang, ruled 202–195 B.C.</li> </ul> 
<b>Where did most of the people live?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Greeks lived on estates near walled palaces</li> <li>Later Greeks lived in a polis and in nearby farms and villages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many lived in farming villages and towns near major rivers</li> <li>Some lived in very large cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landowning aristocrats lived in large houses with gardens and courtyards</li> <li>Most people were farmers living in simple houses in villages or cities</li> </ul>

## Ancient Greece

Chapters 4 & 5

## Early India

Chapter 6

## Early China

Chapter 7

**What were these people's beliefs?**

- Greeks worshiped many gods and goddesses and believed in fate



- Hinduism: complex religion with many deities representing an eternal spirit
- Buddhism: enlightenment available to anyone



- Confucianism: duty directs your life
- Daoism: people should try to be in harmony with nature
- Legalism: people need harsh laws to be good
- Worship of ancestors

**What was their government like?**

- Early Greeks were ruled by kings
- Later, some Greeks developed governments run by citizens

- The warrior class ran the government, usually ruled by a king

- A king or emperor ruled the country
- Aristocrats ran the provinces

**What was their language and writing like?**

- Greek: used characters to form letters and words



- Sanskrit: used characters to form letters and words

- Chinese: symbols that represent objects were combined to represent ideas

**What contributions did they make?**

- Introduced democracy
- Architecture was copied by others
- Developed the idea of theater and drama

- Made advances in medicine, mathematics, science, and literature
- Developed two major religions

- Invented paper and gunpowder
- Cultivated silk

**How do these contributions affect me? *Can you add any?***

- We have a democratic government in the United States
- Modern plays, movies, and television shows have their roots in Greek theater

- "0" is now a part of our number system
- Many people still practice Buddhism and Hinduism

- The papermaking process allows us to create books, newspapers, and other paper products
- Gunpowder and silk are still in use