

ANCIENT CHINA: FACTS ABOUT THE SILK ROAD



“The Silk Road” was the name given to a large network of land and sea routes used to trade silk and many other goods from 130 BCE until 1453 CE. So, it was not a single road and it was not made of silk!

Research the answers to the questions below to learn more about Silk Road trade.

LENGTH: How many miles did the Silk Road trade network cover?	4,000 miles
CONTINENTS: What three continents were connected by the Silk Road?	Asia, Africa, and Europe
BEGINNING: What Chinese city was the eastern starting point for Silk Road trade?	Xian, China
TRANSPORTATION: Traders relied on what kind of animal to help cross the harsh deserts of the Silk Road? Why was this animal well suited to the deserts? List two reasons.	They relied on camels. Camels can carry more weight than other animals and need less water to survive.
SHELTER: There were guest houses along the Silk Road where travelers would stop for food and safe lodging. These houses became popular places to exchange goods and ideas. What were these shelters called?	Caravanserais
RISKS: List three challenges that made travel along the Silk Road dangerous.	Answers may include thieves (or bandits), sand storms, mountain cliffs, diseases, poisonous snakes, spiders, and scorpions.
FAMOUS TRAVELER: What famous Italian explorer traveled the length of the Silk Road from 1254 to 1324 CE?	Marco Polo
SILK: The Silk Road was named for the valuable, shiny fabric that traders were willing to travel far distances to find. The secrets of silk production were so closely guarded that anyone caught smuggling silkworm eggs was killed. What country enacted these strict laws?	China
SPICES: Name three spices traded along the Silk Road.	Answers may include clove, ginger, turmeric, nutmeg, frankincense, myrrh, black pepper, cinnamon, and saffron.
GUNPOWDER: Gunpowder was one of the most dangerous items traded along the Silk Road. What country introduced gunpowder to Silk Road trade?	China
RELIGION: Goods, such as silk and spices, were not the only things exchanged along the Silk Road. Interactions between people from different cultures sparked an exchange of ideas and religious beliefs. In the second century BCE, which religion spread from India to China along the Silk Road?	Buddhism