Section 4
Achievements of Ancient China

Chapter 5
Ancient China
Wudi’s victories brought China into contact with the people of Central Asia.

Trade introduced new foods such as grapes, walnuts, and garlic.

This trade created a new route called The Silk Road which ran from China to the Mediterranean Sea.
The Silk Road was a series of roads covering 4000 miles. Travel was hard and dangerous. The road ran along deserts, and mountains and often travelers had to withstand sand storms. The Silk Road ended in Antioch or modern day Syria.
A Route for Goods

- Most travelers did not travel the entire Silk Road.
- Goods were passed from trader to trader; the price rose at each trade.
- Silk was created from the silk worm; this was a closely guarded secret.
• The Silk Road got its name from silk – a valuable cloth originally made only in China.

• Han Dynasty farmers developed new methods for raising silkworms.

• Workers could dye the silk and weave it into clothing.

• The penalty for revealing this secret was death.
A Route for Ideas

• Missionaries from India brought Buddhism.

• Buddhism became a major religion in China during the Han Dynasty.
Reading Check

• What are silkworms?
  • Silkworms are caterpillars that make silk.
Traditions and Learning

• To bring back respect for tradition the Han Dynasty brought back Confucianism.
Respect for Learning

- Confucianism and Buddhism were both worshipped.
- Confucianism was used as a test for the members of civil service.
- The arts and learning grew under the Han Dynasty
A History of China

- Chinese people had little knowledge of their history; no one was sure of each ruler's accomplishments.

- "Historical Records" written by Sima Qian
Reading Check

• What problem did Sima Qian solve?
  • Before his work, *Historical Records*, Chinese people knew little of their history.
Advances in Technology

- During the Han Dynasty, ancient China became the most advanced civilization in the world.
- They made advances in farming and farming tools.
- They invented paper.
• In medicine, acupuncture was invented.
  • Discovered the circulatory system.
• In technology,
  • they invented an iron plow,
  • rudder for steering ships,
  • the seismoscope for detecting earthquakes,
  • a compass,
  • and a wheelbarrow for hauling goods.
Invention of Paper

- Chinese first used wooden scrolls and bones to keep records.
  - Later they wrote on silk.
  - Then, around 105 AD, the Chinese invented paper.
- They made the paper from tree bark, hemp, and old rags.
  - The materials were soaked in water, beaten into a pulp, and dried flat on screens.
Reading Check

• What did the Chinese write on before they invented paper?

  • The Chinese wrote on wooden scrolls, bones, and silk, before the invention of paper.
Section Assessment

1. (a) Locate

   - Describe the route of the Silk Road.
   - The Silk Road began in Chang’an, went through Persia and Mesopotamia, and ended in Antioch.
1. (b) Infer

- Why were the secrets of silk-making so closely guarded?

- People would not be willing to pay high prices for silk cloth if they knew how to make it themselves.
• 2. (a) List
  • In what ways did the Han dynasty show a respect for Chinese Traditions?
  • The Han dynasty encouraged people to study Confucius’ teachings and supported Chinese arts and scholarship.
2. (b) Draw Conclusions

- Describe the importance of Sima Qian’s role in preserving Chinese traditions.

- He helped the Chinese people to remember their past. His work may have been a model for historians of other civilizations.
3. (a) Recall

Name three important inventions or achievements during the Han dynasty.

Important inventions or achievements were:

- paper
- wheelbarrow
- iron farming tools, such as the plow
- rudder
- compass
- seismoscope
- acupuncture
3. (b) Predict

- How did the achievements of the Han dynasty affect later generations of Chinese people, as well as other peoples?
- Later generations of Chinese received the practical benefits from the inventions and achievements and also a sense of national pride.