



DESCRIPTION OF LESSON

Students learn about the Silk Road, an ancient network of trails and trading routes connecting East Asia to the Mediterranean. They read and discuss descriptions of the Silk Road, map out caravan stops, calculate travel time, and elect a caravan leader.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

History/Social-Science, 6.6 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilization of China; #7 Cite the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk roads” in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations.

VAPA: 2.4 Create increasingly complex original works of art reflecting personal choices and increased technical skill. 3.1 Research and discuss the role of the visual arts in selected periods of history.

VOCABULARY

caravan, desert, flatlands, jade, mountains, sandstorms, silk, steppes, trade/traders

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Read and discuss an article about the Silk Road
- Identify typical caravan stops on a map
- Create silk paintings that reflect the dangers of the Silk Road
- Elect a caravan leader

MATERIALS

- Large Map of the Silk Road (included in curriculum)
- *My Silk Road Journal* (included in curriculum)
- Silk Painting Kit (provided in art materials box)

Silk Paintings by
Sierra Madre students
(from left): Brisa
Sanchez, Casey
Romero, Nina Cheikh

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PROCEDURE

FOCUS: Have kids look at the labels on their clothes, or on toys that they bring from home. Where were they made? Where do goods come from now and how do they get from place to place?

TEACH:

- Distribute workbooks and turn to page one: What was the Silk Road? Have students read as a class or individually. In pairs, students answer the questions at the bottom and then share out in a class discussion.
- Show the large map of the Silk Road and instruct students to turn to page two: Silk Road Map. Split class into four groups. Complete a “jigsaw” activity where each group reads a section and then shares what they learned with the rest of the class. Each group should identify the major caravan stops on the large map. Have the class mark the stops and identify any relevant features (the Great Wall, mountains, etc.) on their handouts.
- Silk painting: Your art supply box comes with a silk painting kit. The kit contains pre-stretched hoops, paints, and other materials. Have each student draw, and then paint on silk, images that relate to what they’ve learned about the Silk Road so far. Ask your visual art specialist for help if you need assistance in teaching this part.
- Last, tell students that they will be spending the next few weeks traveling across the Silk Road. They will be split into 5 different caravan groups. Each group needs a caravan leader. The caravan leader will be elected. Students who would like to run for caravan leader should complete the following homework assignment: make a poster highlighting their relevant strengths (e.g. camel-wrangling abilities, or sandstorm survival skills). The class should elect caravan leaders with a vote later that week, and be assigned to a caravan group.

REFLECT: Have students self-assess their work, using the following rubric. The rubric is also included in the student journals.

Identify typical caravan stops on a map	1 point— Four caravan stops identified.	2 points— Eight caravan stops identified.	3 points— Ten caravan stops identified.
Silk Painting— Craftsmanship	1 point— Artwork shows little attention to craftsmanship; student hurried through project.	2 points— Adequate time and attention given to craftsmanship.	3 points— Painting is well crafted and shows careful use of materials.



Discovering Art in My Community



DESCRIPTION OF LESSON

In this lesson, students learn about people who traveled the Silk Road—soldiers, traders, entertainers, monks, cooks—and their roles. Students choose a character and draw the character in costume, then write about that character’s preparations for the journey.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

History/Social-Science: 6.6 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilization of China; #7 Cite the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk roads” in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations.

VAPA, Visual Art: 2.1 Use various observational drawing skills to depict a variety of subject matter.

English-Language Arts: *Reading* 1.1 Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression; 1.4 Monitor expository text for unknown words or words with novel meanings by using word, sentence, and paragraph clues to determine meaning; *Writing* 1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions.

VOCABULARY

nobles, craftsman, emperor, peasant, merchant, barter, bazaars, chariot, caravan, monk, artisan.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Read & discuss descriptions of typical roles of people who traveled the Silk Road.
- Choose an identity and write about traveling the Silk Road as that character.
- Create drawings of their characters in costume, based on images provided by Pacific Asia Museum.

Musicians and Dancer
China, Tang dynasty
(618–906 AD)
Earthenware,
sancai glaze
Pacific Asia Museum
Collection, Gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Robert
M. Snukal

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MATERIALS

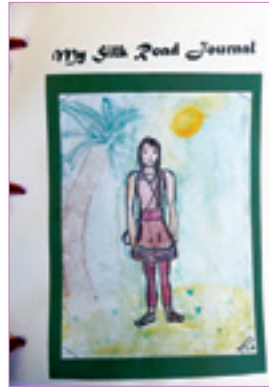
- Large Map of the Silk Road (included in curriculum)
- *My Silk Road Journal* (included in curriculum)
- Overhead Transparencies: *Silk Road Travelers*
- Watercolor paper, cut into 9" x 6" rectangles
- Pencils and erasers
- Watercolors, brushes, plastic cups to hold water, napkins to wipe brushes
- Black ink pens
- White glue

PROCEDURE

FOCUS: Break students into caravan groups and tell them that today is the day that they're going to begin the journey across the Silk Road. Refer to the Large Map and point out the city of **Chang'an (Xi'an)**. Have students read page 5 in their workbooks: *Beginning the Silk Road Journey* aloud as a class. Identify unfamiliar words and ask students to infer their meanings (clarify & define as necessary). Then, as a class, make a list of people who they would need in their caravans to ensure a successful journey.

TEACH:

- Show Overhead Transparencies: *Silk Road Travelers*. As you present each overhead, ask students to read the accompanying descriptions on pages 6 & 7 in their workbooks. Ask students to list the pros and cons of each identity. What would be the best thing about being an entertainer, or an animal handler? What would the challenges be?
- Next, have students choose one of the traveler archetypes. This is the identity they will develop as they travel the Silk Road in their caravan groups. Ask students to write about the preparations that their characters are making for the journey on pages 8 & 9.
- On pages 10 & 11 of their workbooks, have students sketch out draft ideas for what their characters might look like. Students should use what they wrote on the previous pages to inform their sketches.
- Students complete a pen-and-watercolor illustration of their character in costume, based on what they have written. Distribute 6" x 9" pieces of watercolor paper and pencils. Have students draw illustrations lightly on paper with the pencil. Sample illustrations included in the workbook (pgs. 6 & 7) can be viewed for inspiration. Then, the students use watercolors to add color in the background and the foreground. After the watercolor dries, students add details with the fine-point black pens. When the work is complete, use white glue to affix it to the front of the *My Masterpieces* workbook. Place something heavy on top of the drawing to ensure that the corners stay down.



Have students self-assess their work, using the following rubric. The rubric is also included in the student journals.

Write about character's preparations	1 point— Wrote something, but not about the character.	2 points—Wrote about the character's preparations for the journey.	3 points—Wrote about the character's preparations for the journey, in multi-paragraph exposition.
Craftsmanship	1 point—Artwork shows little attention to craftsmanship; student hurried through project.	2 points— Adequate time and attention given to craftsmanship.	3 points—Illustration is well-crafted and shows careful use of materials.
Drawing Relates to Writing	1 point—Little connection between what was written and what was drawn.	2 points— Adequate connection between writing & drawing.	3 points— Strong connection; the artwork truly illustrates the written description.



DESCRIPTION OF LESSON

In this lesson, students further develop their “Silk Road Traveler” characters. They respond in character to events that were common occurrences along the Silk Road, writing and illustrating aspects of the character’s daily life experiences in a journal.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

History/Social-Science, 6.6 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilization of China; #7 Cite the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk roads” in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations.

VAPA: 1.4 Describe how balance is effectively used in a work of art. 3.2 View selected works of art from a culture and describe how they have changed or not changed in theme and content over a period of time.

English-Language Arts: *Reading* 1.1 Read aloud narrative and expository text fluently and accurately and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression; 1.4 Monitor expository text for unknown words or words with novel meanings by using word, sentence, and paragraph clues to determine meaning; *Writing* 1.2 Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions.

VOCABULARY

cavalry, courier, court, equestrian, jade, lacquered, mudra, ornament, polo, scrolls, tomb, ushnisha.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Read and understand “event cards” that describe typical occurrences along the Silk Road.
- Explore related artworks from the Pacific Asia Museum’s collections.
- Respond to events in character, by writing and drawing in their workbooks.

MATERIALS

- Large Map of the Silk Road (included in curriculum)
- *My Silk Road Journal* (included in curriculum)
- “Event Cards” (included in curriculum)
- Overhead Transparencies: *Moving along the Silk Road*

Horse, China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE). Earthenware, sancai lead glaze, pigment, synthetic hair. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal, Pacific Asia Museum Collection.

Groom, China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE). Earthenware, sancai lead glaze. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal, Pacific Asia Museum Collection.

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PROCEDURE

FOCUS: Break students into caravan groups. Refer to the Large Map and draw a line between the city of **Chang'an** northwest towards **Lanzhou**. Have students do the same in their journals.

TEACH:

- There are five overheads titled *Encounters on the Silk Road*. Each one describes an object from the collections of Pacific Asia Museum. Choose an object and have students turn to the corresponding page in their journals.
- As a class, read the section in the journal that describes the object you have chosen. Display the overhead transparency and guide students through an exploration of the image, using the questions in the journal.
- Next, have each caravan leader choose an "Event Card." The caravan leader should bring it back to the group. Groups should brainstorm how they will respond to the event. Groups should also discuss any connections to the object that they viewed on the overhead transparency.
- Last, students should write **multiple-paragraph compositions** in their journals, describing how their characters responded to the events. Students should also make a drawing in the journal that relates to the event.



- Repeat the exercise with the other images on different days. Travel to one more westward caravan stop on each day. Have students mark their journeys on their maps as they travel.

EXTRA CREDIT: For groups that would like to move extra caravan stops, offer the following extra credit assignments:

- Strike a bargain with another caravan group. Perhaps you have something valuable (for example; camels, medicine, water, jade, silk, camphor to use as insect repellent, horses, yak butter) that they need and they have something you need. Draw the other group a picture of the item you are trading and have them do the same. Write a paragraph about the transaction in your journal.
- Research one of the following historical figures: Zhang Quin, Xuan Zang, Marco Polo, Khubilai Khan, Rabban bar Sauma, Sir Aurel Stein. Write down 4-5 facts about the person. Then, write a paragraph describing what would happen if your character met one of these people.
- Buddhism was not the only belief system encountered along the Silk Road. Research one of the other philosophies (Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Daoism, Confucianism, Judaism). Find an image or symbol from that belief system and compare it to the Buddhist images and symbols you learned about in this unit.

REFLECT: After the Silk Road journey is complete, have students self-assess their work, using the following rubric. The rubric is also included in the student journals.

Journal writing	1 point—Wrote something, but not about the event.	2 points—Wrote something about the event.	3 points—Wrote about the event, in a multi-paragraph composition.
Journal drawing	1 point—Made a drawing, but not about the event.	2 points—Drew something about the event .	3 points—Made a thoughtful and complete drawing that relates to the event



DESCRIPTION OF LESSON

In this lesson, which should be taught after the field trip, students reflect upon their experiences “traveling” the Silk Road, both in writing and verbally.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

History/Social-Science, 6.6 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilization of China; #7 Cite the significance of the trans-Eurasian “silk roads” in the period of the Han Dynasty and Roman Empire and their locations.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Report out to the class on what occurred during the journey.
- Reflect upon what they learned during the field trip.
- Take a test that assesses what they have learned.

MATERIALS

- Large Map of the Silk Road (included in curriculum)
- *My Silk Road Journal* (included in the curriculum)

PROCEDURE

FOCUS: Break students into caravan groups. Ask the caravan leader to mark on the class map, with a pushpin, sticker, or erasable marker, how far the group made it across the Silk Road. In their caravan groups, students should discuss the questions listed in their *Silk Road Journals*:

- What was the best thing that happened during the journey?
- What was the worst thing that happened during the journey?
- If they had been alive back then, would they have chosen to travel the Silk Road?
- What were the three most surprising things they learned about ancient China and/or the surrounding countries?
- What else do you want to know about the Silk Road?

Ask students to select a representative to share their responses with the rest of the class.

Bactrian Camel
Japan, Takaoka
City, Meiji Period
(1868–1912 CE)
Bronze
Pacific Asia Museum
Collection, Gift of
Mrs. Wilhemina
Lockhart

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TEACH:

Working alone or in pairs, students should answer the questions in *My Silk Road Journal* about the field trip. Questions are as follows:

- When you saw the artworks in person that you had already seen in class, did they seem different than what you imagined they would look like? If so, how were they different than what you imagined they would look like?
- What new information did you learn during the field trip?
- Why do you think someone would want to collect these artworks and objects?
- What else do you think you could learn about the Silk Road by visiting the Pacific Asia Museum again?

REFLECT:

- *My Silk Road Journal* has a test at the end of the packet. Have students take the test to assess what they learned about Ancient China and the Silk Road through this curriculum.