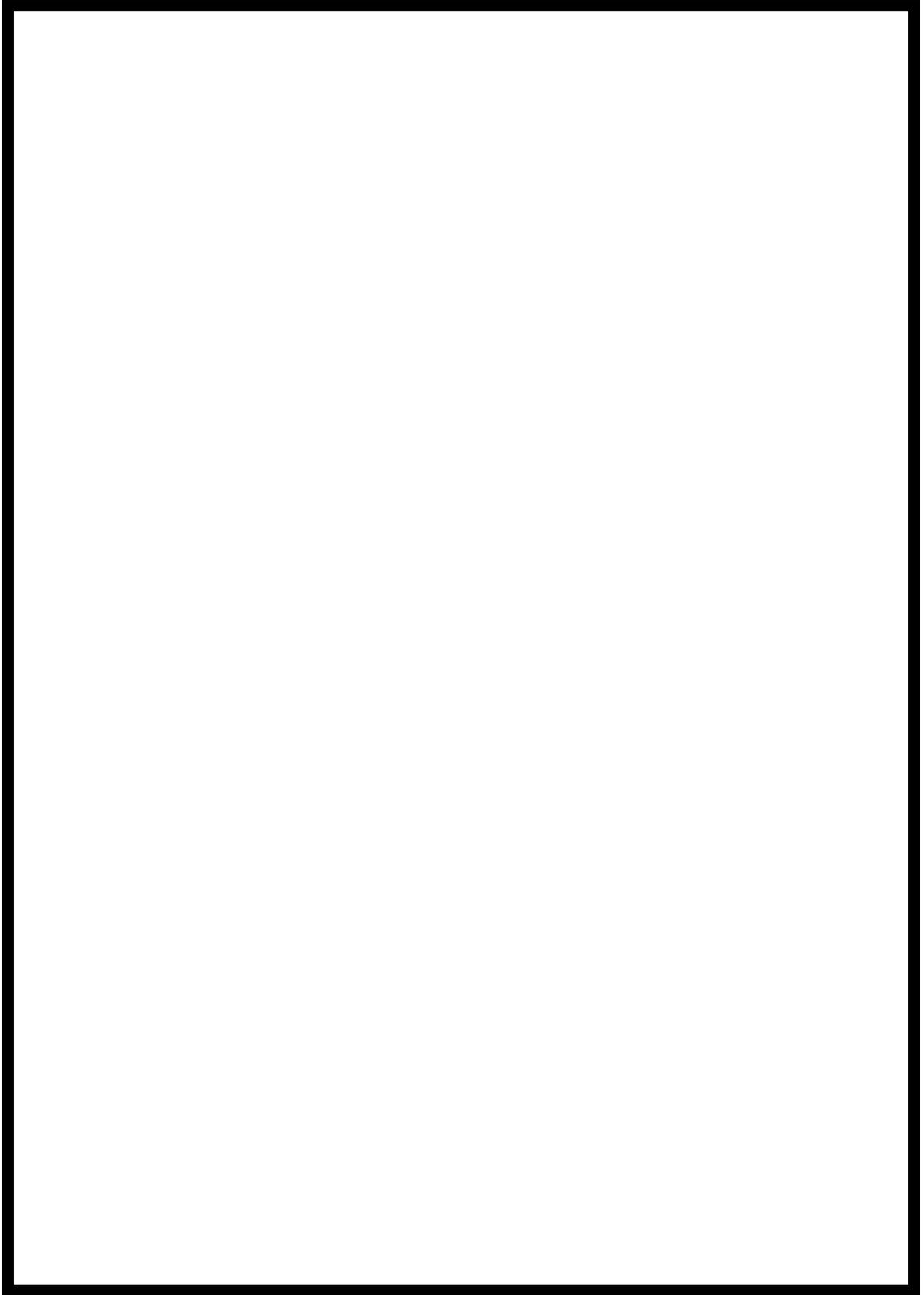


My Silk Road Journal



What was the Silk Road?

About 200 B.C., trade caravans, using camels as beasts of burden, began traveling along the Silk Road between China and the Mediterranean. When the traders had gathered enough camels, trade goods, and soldiers for protection, they began their difficult journey. Silk Road travelers risked freezing to death, being buried by sandstorms, dying of thirst in the high, dry desert, or being attacked by roving bands of robbers.

Why would these Silk Road travelers risk such hardships? The promise of riches lured merchants, soldiers, and adventurers to brave the hazards of the Silk Road. Silk Road trade goods changed hands many times before they reached their destinations. Each time they were bought and sold, the price of the goods rose higher. Because it cost so much to carry goods along the Silk Road, the caravans carried only luxury items such as jade, spices, tea, incense, porcelain, and – of course – silk.

No one outside China knew how to make the precious, durable cloth. China guarded its secret carefully. Smuggling silkworms out of China was punishable by death. By the first century A.D., silk had become the most important product in Chinese society.

The Romans loved Chinese silk. At times in Rome, silk was literally worth its weight in gold. One pound of gold would buy one pound of silk. Silk became so popular in Rome that the government had to ban nobles from wearing it. They were sending too much Roman gold to China to buy it. At the height of the silk trade, one caravan left the Chinese city of Chang'an each month.

The caravans returned to China with gold, silver, ivory, glassware, wool, horses, and new foods. Ideas also spread along the Silk Road. Travelers brought Buddhism and later Islam to China. Officials visited Chang'an from the Asian empires of Persia and Kushan. The Romans sent an official to the Han court to discuss trade, and Chinese officials traveled west to visit the royal courts of Asian empires. The Silk Road formed a powerful link between the formerly isolated China and the growing civilizations of Persia, Rome, India, and Kushan.

Excerpted from City Youth: Ancient History, Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2004

Answer these questions with a partner:

1. What was the Silk Road? Why was it important?

2. What were some dangers on the Silk Road? Why did people risk traveling the Silk Road?

Silk Road Map

Find the points in **bold** and mark them on your map:

The Chinese city of Chang'an (also spelled **Xi'an**) was the starting and ending point of the Silk Road. Caravans of soldiers and merchants assembled in Chang'an. They packed their goods on Bactrian Camels. Native to Asia, this breed of camel has two humps and can carry heavy loads for 30 miles a day. Camels are called the “ships of the desert.” Their eyelids and lashes protect them from sandstorms, their feet are perfect for walking on sand, and they can go for many days without food or water.

From Chang'an, the caravan route went northwest. It took travelers at least 18 days before reaching their next major stop, **Lanzhou**. On the banks of the Yellow River, Lanzhou was a major trading city. Goods flowed to and from Tibet (to the west), Mongolia (to the north), and central China (to the south). Goods were also sent on rafts (made of inflated animal skins) to and from Chinese cities and the Yellow River.

From Lanzhou, the Silk Road went northwest through pastureland. The people who lived there raised horses and grew crops. Horses were often traded along the Silk Road. Everyone wanted horses – from the nomads who attacked China to the Chinese army. The Silk Road continued on northwest for 30 days through towns leading to the Great Wall.

Once past the Great Wall, the Silk Road climbed to **Dunhuang**, on the edge of the Taklamakan Desert. Taklamakan means “Go in and you won't come out.” This huge desert – about 125,000 square miles – was too harsh to cross. So the caravan had to go around it. At Dunhuang, the Silk Road split into two roads – the northern route and the southern route around the desert. Neither route was easy. Sandstorms, sometimes with winds over 100 miles an hour, could bury an entire caravan. Bones of animals and people littered both routes. The sandstorms were usually worse on the southern route. But Mongolian groups threatened the northern route.

The Northern Route – Dunhuang to Kashgar

On the northern route from, the caravan traveled northwest 300 miles to the oasis of **Hami**. It took two weeks to reach Hami. There was little hope of finding water on the way. Winds blew fiercely. From Hami, the route went west. It cut a path between the Taklamakan Desert on the south and the Tian Shan Mountains on the north. Streams from the mountains fed the oases. From Hami, it was another 300 miles to reach the next stop, **Turfan**, known as the Land of Fire. It was located in a basin 500 feet below sea level. The red-sandstone cliffs surrounding the basin were called the Flaming Mountains. The temperature in summer soared above 100 degrees. In winter, it fell below freezing. From Turfan, the route started climbing. It was 300 miles to the next major town, Korla. Although it was 3,000 feet above sea level, it still had a desert landscape. The route was narrow and difficult and had frequent dust storms. It was more than 800 more miles until the route reached **Kashgar**, the last stop around the Taklamakan Desert.

The Southern Route – Dunhuang to Kashgar

Caravans on the southern route went through the foothills of the Hunlun Mountains. Streams from the mountains fed the oases. Along much of this trip, 25-mile-an-hour winds blasted constantly. Blinded by sand, travelers told stories of hearing voices coming from the desert and of people wandering off after the voices, never to be seen again. It was about 900 miles from Dunhuang to **Khotan**, a major source of jade for China. Between Dunhuang and Khotan, travelers could stop at the oasis city of **Cherchen** or camp in the open desert. From Khotan, the Silk Road wound northwest, passing a huge 1,200-square-mile oasis that produced grain, cotton, and fruit. One branch of the Silk Road left Khotan for **Delhi**, a city in India. The other branch climbed 250 miles north to **Kashgar**, where the southern and northern routes joined.

Kashgar and Beyond

Kashgar was a major crossroads of the Silk Road. It was where caravans traded camels for horses, mules, and yaks. The desert part of the trip was over. Steep, dangerous routes of the Silk Road continued west. Other trade routes allowed travelers on the Silk Road to trade with merchants from Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Excerpted from City Youth: Ancient History, Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2004

Rubric

How well did you perform during this lesson? Assess your work.

Map Activity

Identify typical caravan stops on a map	1 point	2 points	3 points
	Four caravan stops identified	Eight caravan stops identified	Ten caravan stops identified

Silk Painting

Craftsmanship	1 point	2 points	3 points
	Artwork shows little attention to craftsmanship; I hurried through this project.	I gave adequate time and attention to this project.	My painting is well crafted and shows careful use of the art materials.

Beginning the Silk Road Journey

Chang'an stood in the middle of the Yellow Valley at the meeting place of two large rivers. Like most walled cities, Chang'an was built in the shape of a square. It had a strong wall "eight horses thick and five men high" surrounding it for protection.

The people of Chang'an came and went through four heavily guarded gates facing north, south, east, and west. Inside, the streets were laid out in straight lines from north to south and east to west. The emperor's palace was located in the north of the city. Nobles and government officials lived close to the emperor. Merchants and craftsmen lived further away from the palace, but still within the city walls. Farmers and other peasants lived outside the gates, but were allowed to come and go to Chang'an's busy markets.

Merchants in the markets accepted gold for goods. They also used barter, trading one item for another. Ban Gu, a Han Dynasty poet, describes a Chang'an street scene:

In the nine markets they set up bazaars,
Their wares separated by type, their shop rows distinctly divided.
There was no room for people to turn their heads,
Or for chariots to wheel about.
People crammed into the city, spilled into the suburbs,
Everywhere streaming into the hundreds of shops.

Trade caravans formed inside the walled city of Chang'an. When the traders had gathered enough camels, trade goods, and soldiers for protection, they began their difficult journey. Silk Road travelers risked freezing to death, being buried by sandstorms, dying of thirst in the high, dry desert, or being attacked by roving bands of robbers.

Excerpted from "City Youth: Ancient History," ©2004 Constitutional Rights Foundation

Silk Road Travelers



Monk – People of many belief systems, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Daoism, Shinto, Confucianism, and Judaism traveled the Silk Road.

From its origins in northeastern India, Buddhism spread into the surrounding countries. Buddhist monks spread the faith as they traveled the Silk Road, and merchants built temples. As they shared the religious ideas with people they met, the religion adapted to each culture, but the main ideas stayed the same.



Artisan – Skilled workers made jewelry, metalwork, rugs, glass & ceramics as luxury goods that are still treasured today. Just as different regions were famous for providing natural materials, the artists of a region became famous for their creations. Trade not only brought objects from one place to another; it also brought new ideas. Many artists along the Silk Road were inspired by what they saw being traded.

Adapted from the Pacific Asia Museum, Family Room Wall Text, 2008



Trader – Traders came from cultures all along the Silk Road. They spoke many different languages, had different customs, and religions, and wore different styles of clothing. What they had in common was that they all made a living bringing items from place to place. Teaming up for safety brought together government officials and private traders, military escorts and hired guards.

Adapted from the Pacific Asia Museum, Family Room Wall Text, 2008

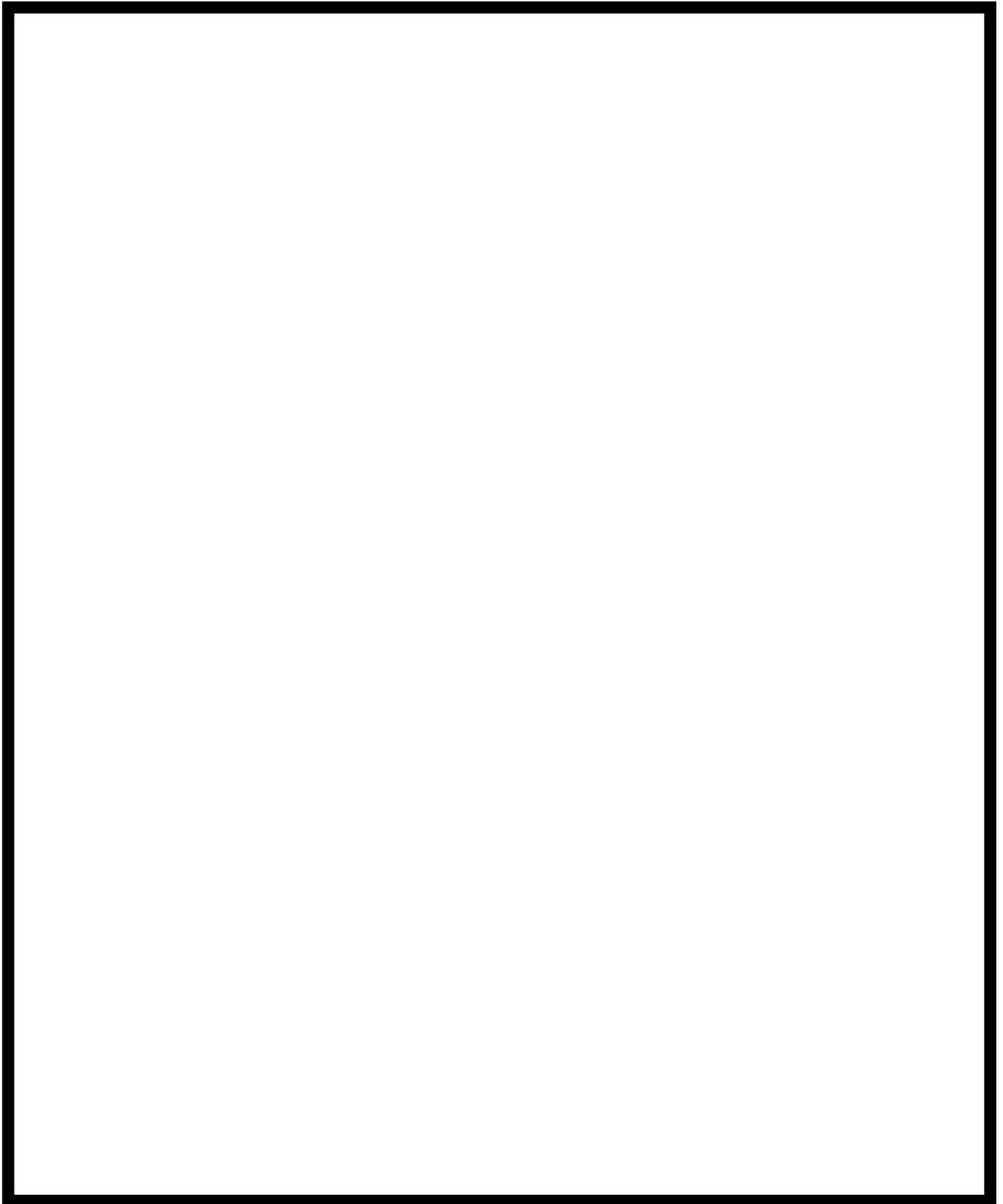
Write about *your* character below:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for writing about a character.

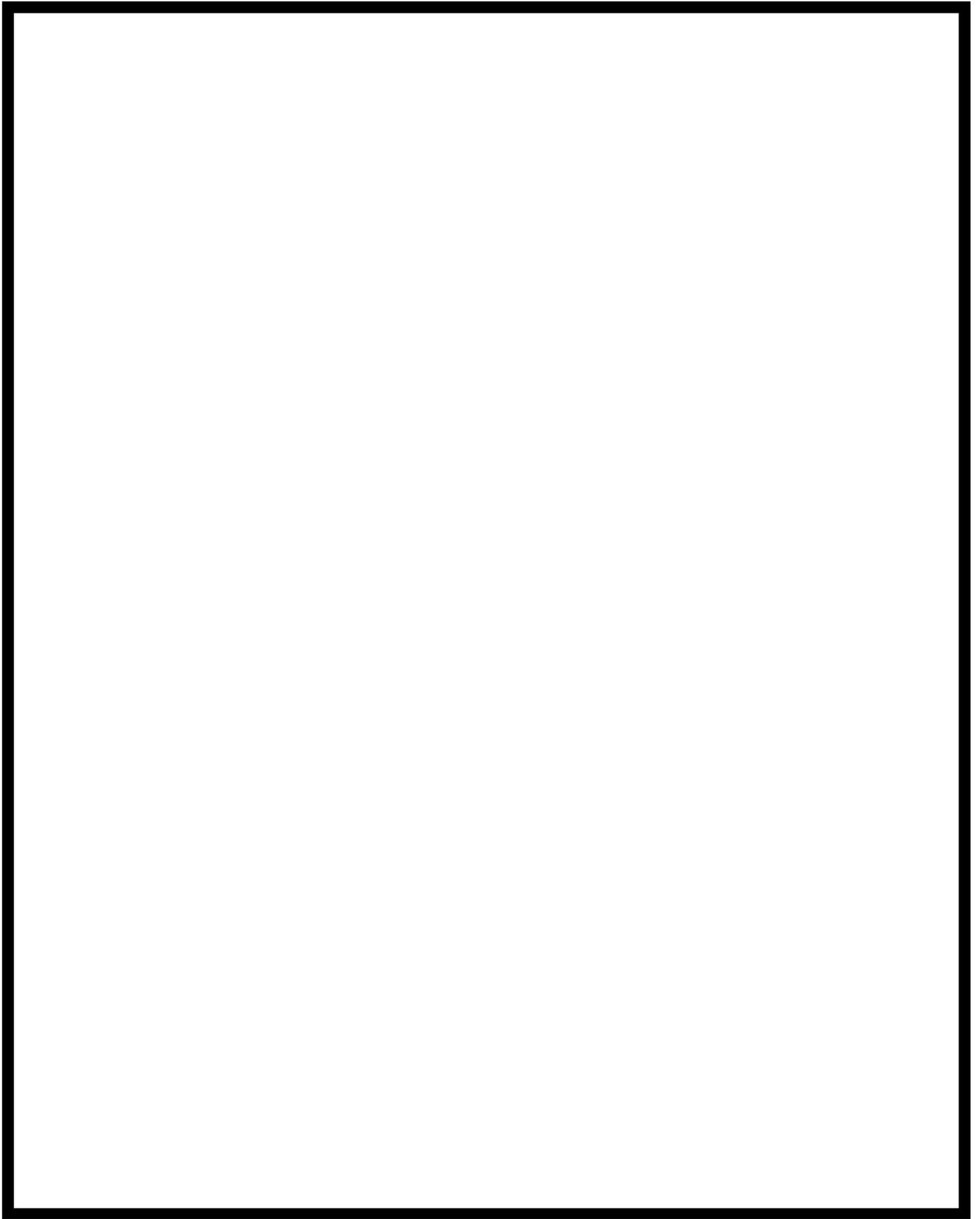
Write about your character below:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for writing about a character.

Sketch out some ideas for your character:



Sketch out some ideas for your character:



Rubric

How well did you perform during this lesson? Assess your work.

Writing

Writing about your character's preparation	1 point	2 points	3 points
	I wrote something, but not about my characters.	I wrote about my character's preparations for the journey.	I wrote about the character's preparations for the journey, in multi-paragraph exposition form.

Illustration for the front of your journal

Craftsmanship	1 point	2 points	3 points
	My artwork shows little attention to craftsmanship; I hurried through the project.	I gave my illustration adequate time and attention.	My illustration is well-crafted and shows careful use of the art materials.
Drawing relates to writing	1 point	2 points	3 points
	There is little connection between what I wrote and what I drew.	There is an adequate connection between what I wrote and what I drew.	There is a strong connection between what I wrote and what I drew; my artwork includes details that I wrote about.

Encounters on the Silk Road



Polo Player
China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)
Earthenware. Pigment
11" H x 13" W x 3.5" D
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal
1999.59.54
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Polo was invented about 2,000 years ago probably in Central Asia. Polo was at first a training game for cavalry units, usually the king's guard or other elite troops. It almost resembled a miniature battle to the tribesmen who played it with as many as 100 on each team. The game eventually spread and became very popular all along the Silk Road. It became known in the East as the 'Game of Kings'. The name polo comes from the Tibetan word 'pulu' meaning ball.

In this sculpture, the player's missing mallet may originally have been wood. The game of Polo was part of the court life in the golden age of Chinese classical culture under the Emperor Ming-Huang (684-762), who was an enthusiastic fan and patron of equestrian activities.

Focus Questions:

1. What kind of actions do you see here? Is it moving or stationary? What makes you say that?
2. What materials is this object made of? Why do you think that?



Pick an event card with this picture on it:

write/draw a response to the event here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a student to write or draw a response to an event. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space.



Horse
China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)
Earthenware, *sancai* lead glaze, pigment,
synthetic hair
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal
1995.102.35B
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Groom
China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)
Earthenware, *sancai* lead glaze
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal
1997.69.84B
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Animals were an important part of the story of the Silk Road. Horses especially were important for traveling to all the different nations along the roads and for trade along the different routes. Horses were first used to pull military chariots and to carry soldiers during the 2nd millennium BCE. This tradition began to spread towards the East from Western Asia to China. As the Chinese army began to depend on horses for their many uses, China began sending large quantities of silk to western tribes all along the Silk Road in exchange for horses and camels that it needed for its army. Clearly not all that silk was being used by nomads but was being traded further west.

When wealthy people died in Ancient China, sculptures of everyday people and things such as this Horse and Horseman were often buried with them. The Chinese believed that this ritual would comfort the part of the soul that stayed with the body, and make it feel more at home. These sculptures are good examples of Chinese tomb ceramics found along the Silk Road.

Focus Questions:

1. What do you notice about this man? How can you describe his clothes and gesture?
2. What do you think the daily job responsibilities of a horse groomsmen like this one would be?

Pick an event card with this picture on it:



write/draw a response to the event here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a student to write or draw a response to an event. The box occupies most of the page below the instruction.



Bactrian Camel
Japan, Takaoka City, Meiji Period (1868-1912 CE)
Bronze
21” H x 7” W x 18” D
Gift of Mrs. Wilhemina Lockhart
1984.55.20
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

This Bactrian camel may have been used as a tomb figure. The Bactrian camel has two humps on its back, in contrast to the single-humped Dromedary camel. It is native to the cold deserts of Central Asia. Camels were very important to trade on the Silk Road. Much of China’s trade with the West used camels, and the camels must have been a familiar sight all over Asia. This type of camel – the Bactrian camel- was not originally from China. Instead, thousands of these camels were imported into Chinese cities from the states of the Tarim Basin, eastern Turkistan and Mongolia. Camels were so important to Chinese trade and businesses that the state even created a special office to supervise camel herds which carried out various official state assignments, including military courier service to the Northern Frontier. The camel was also used by the Chinese court and the Chinese merchants for local transportation. They were called ‘the ships of the desert’ since they linked China to the oasis cities of Persia and Syria.

Focus Questions:

1. Why do you think camels were ideal to use in caravans on the Silk Road?
2. What would be the modern equivalent of a camel caravan that we use to transport and trade goods in today’s world?

Pick an event card with this picture on it:



write/draw a response to the event here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a student to write or draw a response to an event. The box occupies most of the page's vertical space.



Buddha
Thailand, Ayundhya period (1350-1769 CE)
Bronze
26.75" H x 14.5" W x 7" D
Gift of Edward Nagel
1984.90.8
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

This Thai bronze image of the Buddha has many features that are typical of Thai Buddhist figures from the Sukhothai period (13th – 14th centuries). Thai Buddha images have elongated faces and graceful slender bodies. In some cases, the Buddha is actually depicted walking, a posture unique to Thai images. In addition, the *Ushnisha*, or bump on the Buddha's head is stretched upwards and ends in the shape of a flame, another feature unique to Thai Buddha images. The facial features are also stylized and very curvy, with the eyebrows often meeting the line of the nose. This image has eyes inlaid with shell.

Thailand is one of the Asian countries that adopted Buddhism, a tradition transmitted to Southeast Asia by monks traveling on many trade routes around the middle of the 1st millennium.



Seated Buddha
Vietnam, c. 1600 CE
Gilt, Lacquer, Wood, Pigment
18" H x 12.5" W x 9" D
Museum purchase with funds provided by the Bressler Foundation
1996.28.2
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Buddhism also spread to Vietnam, and artists there adapted the image of Buddha to suit their needs. This seated Buddha is a fine example of Vietnamese lacquered Buddha images. A lacquered statue is one that is made out of wood then painted with a colorful varnish that gives the statue a strong and shiny appearance. Buddha figures were first carved in wood, and then coated with layers of lacquer to make them not only colorful but also resistant to water, heat and insects. Vietnamese Buddhist figures are usually simple in detail and generally have calm sweet facial expressions. The Buddha's *Ushnisha* is also very pronounced, rising out as a copper mound from among curls of hair. His hands are in the *Dhyana Mudra*, meaning a gesture of mediation. Many people in Vietnam are Buddhist and worship images such as this example in temples.

Focus Questions:

1. What are some of the materials you see on these sculptures? What are the bodies made out of? The eyes?
2. How are the emotions on the face of one Buddha similar/different from the other one? How about the body?

Pick an event card with this picture on it:



write/draw a response to the event here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a student to write or draw a response to an event.



Crab Claw Earrings

China, late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 CE)

Jadeite

**Gift of Mrs. Maria Lim McClay and her husband Mr. Booker McClay in loving memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. T.P. Lim
Pacific Asia Museum Collection**

1998.36.1a,b



Bangle

China, late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 CE)

Jadeite

Gift of Mr. William and Mrs. Catherine Lim in loving memory of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. T.P. Lim

1997.37.1

Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Jade has been a very precious gem for thousands of years. It has a unique shine, and comes in many shades of green, white, gray, yellow, black and orange. As early as 3000 BCE, jade was known in China and called 'yu' or the 'Royal Gem'. In the long history of the art and culture of the enormous Chinese empire, jade has always had a very special significance, roughly comparable with that of gold and diamonds in the West. It was used to make the finest objects and religious figures, but was also used in grave furnishings for high-ranking members of the Chinese imperial family.

Today, this gem is still regarded as a symbol of the good, the beautiful and the precious. It embodies the Confucian virtues of wisdom, justice, compassion, modesty and courage. History tells us that the Chinese Empress Cixi (1835-1908) altered the taste for jade. She began to commission jade to be used in jewelry and adornment objects rather than ritual objects. She was also fascinated by pure green jade, which today is called 'Imperial Jade'. She is said to have owned these pendants, which she may have worn as hair ornaments before they were converted into earrings in Shanghai in the 1920s or 1930s.

Focus Questions:

1. What tools do you think were used to make these decorative pieces?
2. How else do you think these earrings could've been used as adornments?

Pick an event card with this picture on it:



write/draw a response to the event here:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a student to write or draw a response to an event. The box occupies most of the page below the instruction.

Rubric

How well did you perform on your Silk Road travels? Assess your work.

Journal writing & drawing

Writing	1 point	2 points	3 points
	I wrote something, but not about the event.	I wrote about the event.	I wrote about the event, in a multi-paragraph composition.
Drawing	I made a drawing, but not about the event.	I drew something about the event.	I made a thoughtful and complete drawing that relates to the event.

GRADE 6

Lesson 2

Silk Road
Travelers



Beginning the Silk Road Journey



Shindi Defile towards Chichiklik Dawan
China, Xinjiang

Early 20th century

Photograph

© British Library

Stein Collection

View looking along a narrow passage, with caravan of ponies in foreground.

Xuanzang and Great Goose Pagoda

China, Xi'an

Contemporary photograph

Courtesy of Meher McArthur



Silk Road Travelers: Monk



A sketch from Dunhuang (Stein Painting 163).
© The British Museum



Painting from Dunhuang of a traveller carrying scriptures.
Now at the British Museum (Stein Painting 168). © The British Museum

Silk Road Travelers: Entertainers



Musicians and dancer; set of four

China, Tang Dynasty

618-906 CE

Earthenware, *sancai* lead glaze, pigment, synthetic hair

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal

Silk Road Travelers: Animal Handlers



Horse

China, Tang Dynasty

618-906 CE

Earthenware, *sancui* lead glaze, pigment, synthetic hair

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal

Groom

China, Tang Dynasty

618-906 CE

Earthenware, *sancui* lead glaze

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal



Kalmak starting for Chimen-tagh

China; Miran; Xinjiang

1907

© British Library

Stein Collection

Hungarian archaeologist M. Aurel Stein on one of his Four Central Asian expeditions between 1900 and 1930.

Photograph shows the camel driver with loaded camels, with Stein standing on the right.

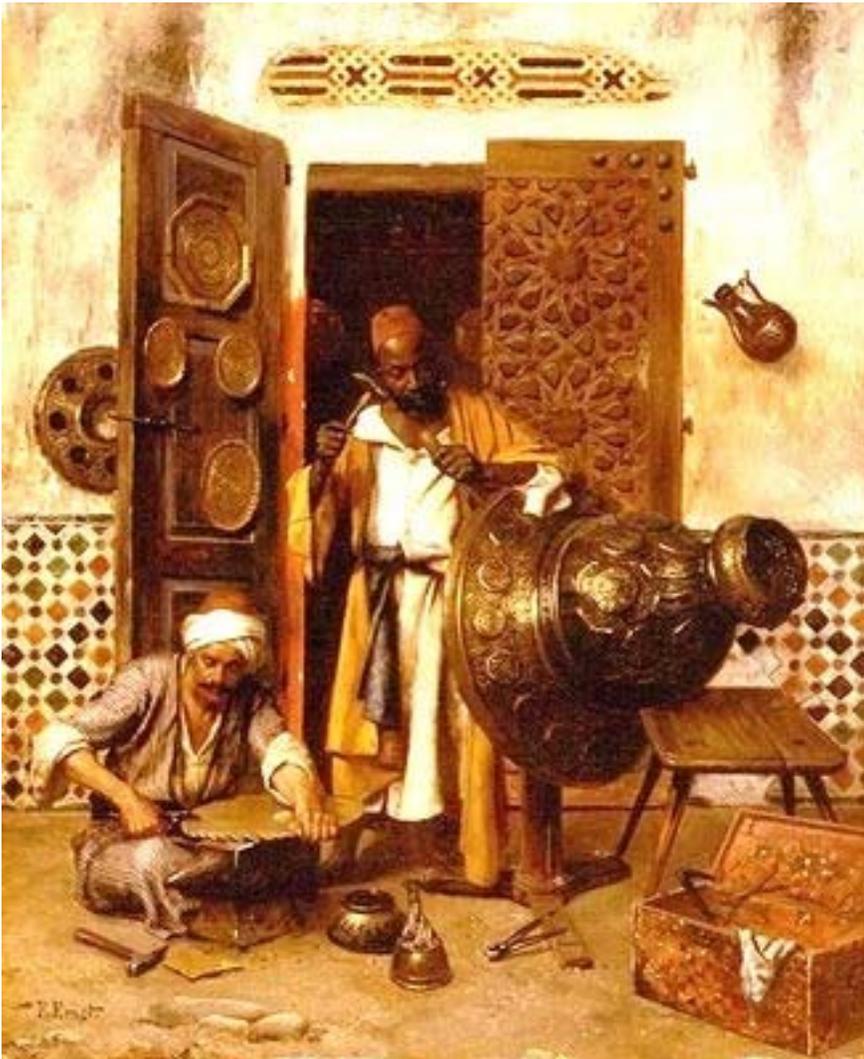
Silk Road Travelers: Silkmakers



Silk Road Travelers: Traders



Silk Road Travelers: Artisans



Rudolf Ernst (Austrian, 1854-1932)

The Metal Workers

Oil on panel, 24 1/4 x 19 1/4 in.

Signed lower left: R. Ernst

Dahesh Museum of Art

GRADE 6

Lesson 3

Moving along
the Silk Road



Polo Player
China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)
Earthenware. Pigment
11" H x 13" W x 3.5" D
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal
1999.59.54
Pacific Asia Museum Collection



Horse

China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)

Earthenware, *sancai* lead glaze, pigment, synthetic hair

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal

1995.102.35B

Pacific Asia Museum Collection

Groom

China, Tang Dynasty (618-906 CE)

Earthenware, *sancai* lead glaze

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Snukal

1997.69.84B

Pacific Asia Museum Collection

GRADE 6

Lesson 3

Moving along
the Silk Road



Bactrian Camel
Japan, Takaoka City, Meiji Period (1868-1912 CE)
Bronze
21" H x 7" W x 18" D
Gift of Mrs. Wilhemina Lockhart
1984.55.20
Pacific Asia Museum Collection



(LEFT) Buddha
Thailand, Ayundhya period (1350-1769 CE)
Bronze
26.75" H x 14.5" W x 7" D
Gift of Edward Nagel
1984.90.8
Pacific Asia Museum Collection

(RIGHT) Seated Buddha
Vietnam, c. 1600 CE
Gilt, Lacquer, Wood, Pigment
18" H x 12.5" W x 9" D
Museum purchase with funds provided by the Bressler Foundation
1996.28.2
Pacific Asia Museum Collection



(LEFT) Crab Claw Earrings
China, late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 CE)
Jadeite

Gift of Mrs. Maria Lim McClay and her husband Mr. Booker McClay in loving
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Pacific Asia Museum Collection
1998.36.1a,b

(RIGHT) Bangle
China, late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 CE)
Jadeite

Gift of Mr. William and Mrs. Catherine Lim in loving memory of his parents, Mr. and
Mrs. T.P. Lim
1997.37.1
Pacific Asia Museum Collection