JOURNEY TO ASIA

Explorers from Asia and Europe kept journals of their travels. Keep your own journal. Make sketches, write down stories you hear, and describe the cultures you encounter. When you return to your classroom, you can create a book about your travels in Asia and share it with your classmates.

THE SILK ROAD — SAMARKAND

The Lure of Asia
You are in the market at Samarkand. People came by caravan from all parts of Asia to trade in the bazaar. What means of transportation did you use to get here? Look at the painting in the diorama in front of you for ideas. What will you do now—eat, relax, or trade? Look at the objects in the case. Choose three items to bring back to your own city in the West and describe them in your journal.

INDIA

Theater and Festival
Now you have arrived in a small town in India, and a theater performance is going on as part of a festival. Many of our fairytales like, Cinderella, were probably first told in India. Choose a mask or puppet. Make a sketch of it. Describe what you think the character represented by this mask or puppet is like. Later try to make up a fairytale based on this character.

The Wedding
In this village, a wedding is about to take place. For this special occasion, the bride and groom have traditional clothing on. Who do you think the other guests at the wedding are (imagine who usually goes to a wedding)? The man standing is a village barber, and he has helped arrange the wedding for the parents of the bride and groom. They let their parents pick their partner. One hundred years ago, the two might have only been 11 and 15 years old. What were the advantages of early marriages?
The Frontiers
As we approach China on our caravan, we see the Great Wall in the distance. Many soldiers wrote poetry about being stationed along the borders of China

In the poem *Mending Wall*, Robert Frost, a famous American poet wrote:

"Before I built a wall I’d ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn’t love a wall."

If you were a Chinese wheat farmer (like the one on the right side of the painting), how do you think you would feel about the Great Wall? Why?

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If you were a nomadic trader (like the ones on the left side of the painting and whose bones are in front of you), how do you think you would feel about the Great Wall? Why?

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What items might people on each side of the wall trade? Who would be better soldiers?

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Back in your classroom you and your classmates could create a wall of your own poems.
**Student Field Journal**

**TRADITIONAL CHINA**

**Theater**
In Chinese villages, festivals include theater performances, foods, and objects to buy. Look at the painting at the top of the case showing a Chinese New Year Festival. Select a puppet, painted face design, or opera figure from the case. One of the most famous tales in China is about a naughty monkey with fabulous powers. Pick one of the faces that looks like a monkey, or a face you like, and sketch it.

**The Wedding**
As you move down the road in China, a wedding chair passes your caravan. In a traditional Chinese wedding the bride would be transported to her new home (probably with her in-laws) in a special red or decorated sedan chair. Families rented these wedding chairs and one wedding chair would be used in hundreds of different weddings. This chair might have carried happy brides and sad brides. If this chair could tell you a story, what do you think it might say?

**City Street Scene Mural**
The mural above you is a street in China at the time of Marco Polo. Can you find any of the events or objects you have seen today? Select a section of the mural and draw what you see.
The Japanese Farmhouse
This is a house of a wealthy farmer in Japan 100 years ago. Imagine you are sitting somewhere in the house or garden. What would you hear? Feel? Touch? What materials were used to build the house? The roof and windowpanes are made from the same plant. What is a common Asian plant? Why might this house be safe in an earthquake?

Traditional Clothing
Can you find the clothing of a farmer, a geisha (performer), and a Shinto priest? Describe one.

Shinto Festivals, Buddhist Festivals, and Annual Festivals
Which festival would you like to participate in with your family—New Year (a Shinto festival), Obon (a Buddhist festival), or the Doll Festival (celebrated at home)? Find the Shinto shrine, the doll display, or the Buddhist altar and giant statue of Buddha. Pick an artifact in the display; describe a festival and how the object would be used.
KOREA

The Confucian Tradition
In Korea, you have been invited into the home of a wealthy family. Here are two sections of a Korean home. In the section representing the study of the house sits the husband, a scholar. Describe the scholar, what he wears and what he is doing. What kinds of jobs would be hard to do in his clothes?

The Uniqueness
The other section represents the back room, where the wife works. Compare the two rooms and the activities of the scholar and his wife.

Sketch a boat:

THE TRADITIONAL TRADE ROUTES OF ASIA

Pick a boat to carry you home. Sketch it. Pick a spice or other trade item to take home. Explain why you picked this. Bon voyage!