

Explore GEOGRAPHY & TRADE

Overview

Students will explore the geography and significance of Silk Road trade, and create a collage map of the region's topography and trade.

Background for Educator

chinainstitute.org/_data/n_0002/resources/live/fromsilktooil_pdf1.pdf

Read the essays "Geography Along The Silk Road" and "Exchange of Goods and Ideas Along The Silk Roads." They explain the geography and economics of the Silk Road network. Both are found in Part I of the China Institute's curriculum, *From Silk to Oil: Cross-Cultural Connections Along The Silk Roads*.

Before Your Visit

Class Discussion: Silk Road Geography

silkroadproject.org/Education/TheSilkRoad/SilkRoadMaps/tabid/177/Default.aspx

Print copies of these maps, or have students examine them online. Drawing on this information, discuss how the geography and climate of Central Asia shaped trading routes. Ask students: Between Xi'an and Turfan, and on to Samarkand and Baghdad, what kinds of terrains and climate zones would travelers have encountered? (*Answers may include: The Gobi Desert, the Taklamakan Desert, and the Altai Mountains.*)

During Your Visit

Traveling the Silk Road Exhibition 3rd floor (30-45 minutes)

Have students explore the exhibition and select one city on which to focus for their **student worksheet** investigation. Then have students look at the "Explore the Silk Road" interactive table map in the Samarkand section. Explain that back in the classroom, they will create a map of the Silk Road that contains information about its topography, people, trade routes, and artifacts.

Stout Hall of Asian Peoples 2nd floor (15-20 minutes)

After leaving the Silk Road exhibition, descend the staircase one flight and enter the Stout Hall of Asian Peoples through the door to your left. Begin at the Samarkand exhibit. Refer to the diagram at the bottom of the case to illustrate to students that as you walk through the hall you are tracing a Silk Road voyage from Central Asia to China (west to east). In the China section (yellow walls) have students look for Chinese inventions and other objects and luxury goods that might have been traded over both land and sea routes.

Back in the Classroom

Activity: Create a Silk Road Collage Map

amnh.org/ology/silkroadfables

This activity calls for students to discuss and present their observations about the cities, environments, and objects found along the Silk Road. As a class, using the data and drawings from their worksheets, students should collaborate on a map of the Silk Road, listing information such as topography, cities, routes, and objects found in different places. You may wish to use the map provided in the Educator's Guide as a base, in addition to online resources.

Activity: Trading Goods & Resources

chinainstitute.org/_data/n_0002/resources/live/fromsilktooil_pdf3.pdf

"Geography Along The Silk Roads: Oases, Towns, and Caravans" (p. 82) is a game that will help students understand the geography of Central Asia and participate in trading goods and resources along the Silk Road.

New York State Social Studies Standards

Standard 3—Geography

Performance Indicator 3.1c

Investigate why people and places are located where they are located and what patterns can be perceived in these locations.

Standard 4—Economics

Performance Indicator 4.1a

Explain how societies and nations attempt to satisfy their needs and wants by utilizing scarce capital, natural, and human resources.

Plan how your students will explore *Traveling the Silk Road*. In the exhibition, students will choose one of the four cities to investigate further, using the **student worksheets**. You might divide the class into four teams before you come to the Museum, or prefer to let them choose on site.

Distribute copies of the student worksheets to students before coming to the Museum.

In *Traveling the Silk Road*, students can stamp Passports as they enter each of the four cities. Pick up the Passports at the exhibition entrance.

The *Traveling the Silk Road* exhibition takes you along the world's oldest international highway, a voyage that spans six centuries (AD 600 to 1200). It showcases four representative cities: Xi'an, Turfan, Samarkand, and Baghdad.



Choose a city. Mark its location on the map by circling it.

City Name: _____


Look at the pictures, videos, and descriptions of this city. Describe what the city and its natural environment were like, who lived there, and who traveled through it

Select an object that was traded in this city.

What is it? _____

Describe the object (shape, color, uses, materials, other characteristics).

Sketch the object:



What natural resources do you think would be needed to create this object?

Why might a merchant trade this object? How might its value change as it travels further from its origins?

How does this object reflect technologies, ideas, or religions that traveled along the Silk Road?

ANSWER KEY

The *Traveling the Silk Road* exhibition takes you along the world's oldest international highway, a voyage that spans six centuries (AD 600 to 1200). It showcases four representative cities: Xi'an, Turfan, Samarkand, and Baghdad.



Choose a city. Mark its location on the map by circling it.

City Name: (Answers may include: Xi'an, Turfan, Samarkand, Baghdad)

Look at the pictures, videos, and descriptions of this city. Describe what the city and its natural environment were like, who lived there, and who traveled through it

(Answers may include: Xi'an is a metropolis that is home to nearly a million people.

There are imperial buildings, city walls, temples, and markets, as well as tree and rivers. Turfan is a lush oasis offering refuge from the harsh Taklimakan Desert.

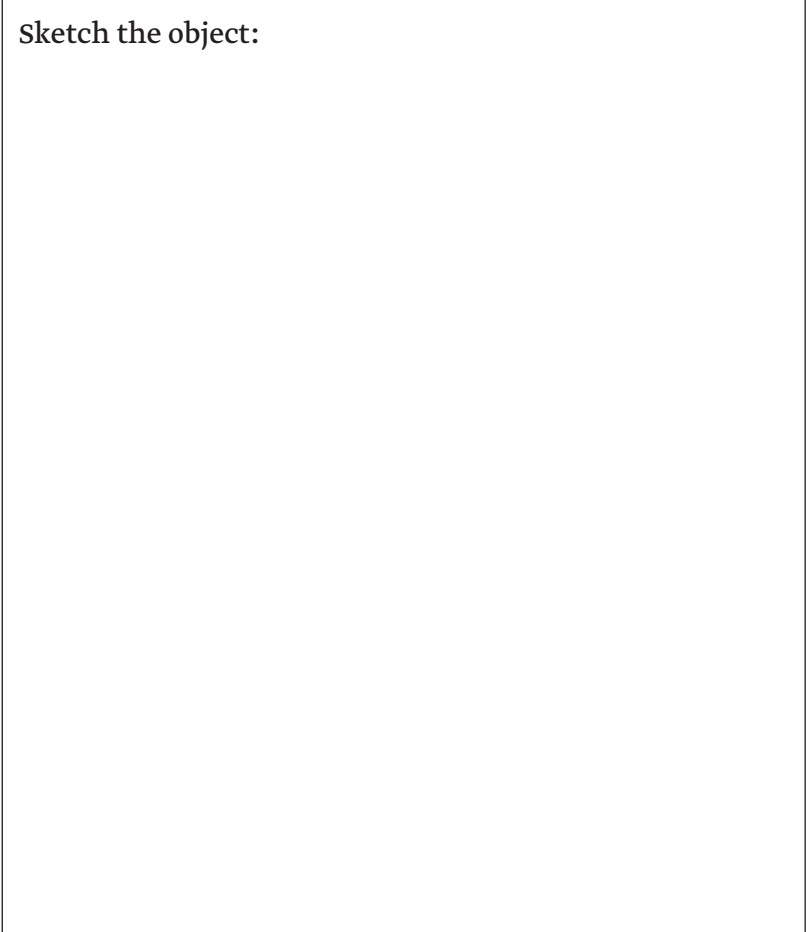
Samarkand is a city filled with caravanserais. Baghdad is an elegant metropolis, with beautiful palaces, gardens, and river.)

Select an object that was traded in this city.

What is it? *(Answers will vary)* _____

Describe the object (shape, color, uses, materials, other characteristics).

Sketch the object:



What natural resources do you think would be needed to create this object?

Why might a merchant trade this object? How might its value change as it travels further from its origins?

How does this object reflect technologies, ideas, or religions that traveled along the Silk Road?

New York State STANDARDS

NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS FOR LEARNING

Elementary

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1c study about different world cultures and civilizations focusing on their accomplishments, contributions, values, beliefs, and traditions.
- 2.2c compare important events and accomplishments from different time periods in world history.
- 2.3a understand the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and religious practices and activities.
- 2.3b gather and present information about important developments from world history
- 2.4a consider different interpretations of key events and developments in world history and understand the differences in these accounts.
- 2.4b explore the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, rules and laws, and social/cultural needs .and wants of people during different periods in history and in different parts of the world
- 2.4c view historic events through the eyes of those who were there, as shown in their art, writings, music, and artifacts.

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a study about how people live, work, and utilize natural resources.
- 3.1d identify and compare the physical, human, and cultural characteristics of different regions and people.
- 3.1e investigate how people depend on and modify the physical environment.
- 3.2a ask geographic questions about where places are located; why they are located where they are; what is important about their locations; and how their locations are related to the location of other people and places.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a know some ways individuals and groups attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce resources.
- 4.1d study about how the availability and distribution of resources is important to a nation's economic growth.
- 4.1e understand how societies organize their economies to answer three fundamental economic questions: What goods and services shall be produced and in what quantities? How shall goods and services be produced? For whom shall goods and services be produced?
- 4.1f investigate how production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of goods and services are economic decisions with which all societies and nations must deal.

Middle School

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1b know some important historic events and developments of past civilizations.
- 2.1c interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.
- 2.2c study about major turning points in world history by investigating the causes and other factors that brought about change and the results of these changes.
- 2.3a investigate the roles and contributions of individuals and groups in relation to key social, political, cultural, and religious practices throughout world history.
- 2.3b interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.
- 2.4c view history through the eyes of those who witnessed key events and developments in world history by analyzing their literature, diary accounts, letters, artifacts, art, music, architectural drawings, and other documents.

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a map information about people, places, and environments.
- 3.1c investigate why people and places are located where they are located and what patterns can be perceived in these locations.
- 3.1d describe the relationships between people and environments and the connections between people and places.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a explain how societies and nations attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce capital, natural, and human resources.
- 4.1b define basic economic concepts such as scarcity, supply and demand, markets, opportunity costs, resources, productivity, economic growth, and systems.

High School

Standard 2: World History

Students:

- 2.1b understand the development and connectedness of Western civilization and other civilizations and cultures in many areas of the world and over time.
- 2.1d understand the broad patterns, relationships, and interactions of cultures and civilizations during particular eras and across eras.
- 2.2e investigate key events and developments and major turning points in world history to identify the factors that brought about change and the long-term effects of these changes.
- 2.3a analyze the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, and religious practices and activities.
- 2.3b explain the dynamics of cultural change and how interactions between and among cultures has affected various cultural groups throughout the world.
- 2.3c examine the social/cultural, political, economic, and religious norms and values of Western and other world cultures.
- 2.4b interpret and analyze documents and artifacts related to significant developments and events in world history.

New York State STANDARDS (cont'd)

Standard 3: Geography

Students:

- 3.1a understand how to develop and use maps and other graphic representations to display geographic issues, problems, and questions.
- 3.1d understand the development and interactions of social/cultural, political, economic, and religious systems in different regions of the world.
- 3.1e analyze how the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of the Earth's surface .
- 3.1f explain how technological change affects people, places, and regions.

Standard 4: Economics

Students:

- 4.1a analyze the effectiveness of varying ways societies, nations, and regions of the world attempt to satisfy their basic needs and wants by utilizing scarce resources.
- 4.1f explain how economic decision making has become global as a result of an interdependent world economy.

NEW YORK STATE SCIENCE CORE CURRICULUM

Elementary

LE7.1a Humans depend on their natural and constructed environments.

LE 7.1b Over time humans have changed their environment by cultivating crops raising animals, creating shelter, using energy, manufacturing goods, developing transportation, changing populations, and carrying out other activities.

High School

Living Environment Standard 1

1.1b Learning about the historical development of scientific concepts or about individuals who have contributed to scientific knowledge provides a better understanding of scientific inquiry and the relationship between science and society.

Living Environment Standard 4

1.1b An ecosystem is shaped by the nonliving environment as well as its interacting species. The world contains a wide diversity of physical conditions, which creates a variety of environments.

7.3a Societies must decide on proposals which involve the introduction of new technologies. Individuals need to make decisions which will assess risks, costs, benefits, and trade-offs.

7.3b The decisions of one generation both provide and limit the range of possibilities open to the next generation.