

The Silk Road

Social Studies Standards Covered: 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Vocabulary

expedition - a journey by a group of people for a specific reason or purpose (noun)

revolutionize - to drastically change something (verb)

consumers - people who buy goods or services (noun)

paiza - ancient tablet (noun)

account - a report or description (noun)

implausible - not believable or realistic (adjective)

transported - carried someone or something from one place to another (verb)

route - a way of travel to a destination (noun)

twisted - curved or changed direction suddenly (verb)

Literature Links

The Travels of Marco Polo (Modern Library Classics) by Marco Polo (Author), Manuel Komroff (Editor), William Marsden (Translator), Jason Goodwin (Introduction)

Who Was Marco Polo? by Joan Holub

The Story of Silk: From Worm Spit to Woven Scarves by Richard Sobol

Day 1 (40 minutes)

Marco Polo

Social Studies Standards Covered: 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Vocabulary: expedition

Lesson Tasks

Marco Polo

Inquiry Model - Student-centered strategy centered on asking questions, probing situations, analyzing sources, describing, communicating findings and reflecting on obtained knowledge.

Students will read the article together. Students will do further research on the internet and evaluate whether or not they believe Marco Polo's journey occurred. Students are expected to have at least three talking points ready to provide support for their decision.

English Language Learner: The project may be completed with a partner or peer that is able to support the learner.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

Marco Polo

Q: It is not known how Marco Polo and Kublai Khan started their relationship. What theory do you believe started Marco Polo's relationship with the ruler?

A: Answers will vary. Student should include Kublai Khan's interest in Marco Polo's intelligence.
high/5

Marco Polo

Q: Why did it take Marco Polo three years to write “The Travels of Marco Polo”?

A: Answers will vary. Possible answers: He had a lot to write; there was a scarcity of writing materials
moderate low/2

Day 2 (40 minutes)

The Travels of Marco Polo

Sericulture

Social Studies Standards Covered: 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Vocabulary: revolutionize, consumers

Lesson Tasks

The Travels of Marco Polo

Inquiry Model - Student-centered strategy centered on asking questions, probing situations, analyzing sources, describing, communicating findings and reflecting on obtained knowledge.

Students will read the day’s article with a partner using Pairs Reading. When the reading session has been completed, have the paired students work on the worksheet, “Marco Polo’s Journal.”

Gifted and Talented Learner: These students will be paired with English Language Learners and Below Level/Developing students to assist them with their reading and completion of the worksheet.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

The Travels of Marco Polo

Q: Why did Kublai Khan like Marco Polo?

A: Kublai Khan liked Marco Polo because he found him to be intelligent.
moderate low/2

The Travels of Marco Polo

Q: What did Khan want the Polo brothers to bring him from the west?

A: Kublai Khan wanted them to bring back knowledge of the wests culture, civilization, and gifts.
moderate low/2

Lesson Tasks

Sericulture

K-W-L Chart: Students should fill out the first two columns of their worksheet before reading the article. Read through the article as a class. As students hear or read additional information, they should add it to the third column of their worksheet. Take questions from students as they come up. Answer as a group, writing the answers on the board for all to see.

Gifted and Talented Learner: Students may create a slideshow of the life cycle of the silkmoth that can be presented to the class.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

Sericulture

Q: In your own words, give a detailed explanation of how silk is made, from egg to cloth.

A: Eggs are taken care of until they hatch. Then the larvae grow and develop by having a steady diet of mulberry leaves. Then the caterpillar weaves its cocoon. People then take over from here. They take the cocoon and emerge it into boiling water. Here it deconstructs into one long thread, which then gets put on reels for weaving. The thread is then woven into cloth.

moderate low/2

Day 3 (40 minutes)

The Gobi Desert

A “Key” to the Empire

Verifiable Sources?

Social Studies Standards Covered: 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Vocabulary: paiza, account, implausible

Lesson Tasks

The Gobi Desert

Possible Sentences - Vocabulary development activity where students, given a number of words from a text, create sentences they think make sense using the words. Sentences are shared and discussed before and after reading.

The teacher will write the following 10 vocabulary words and phrases (found in the article) on the board: harrows, mirages, optical illusions, sparse, unnerved, vegetation, detailed, located, widest, narrowest. The students will help define the words; the teacher will write the definitions on the board. Then, on a separate piece of paper, students will use the words in complete, correctly-written sentences. The students will share their favorite sentences with the class.

Below Level/Developing Learner: Place these students with a more advanced reader for assistance writing their sentences.

English Language Learner: Place these students with a more advanced reader for assistance writing their sentences.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

The Gobi Desert

Q: Describe what a day in the Gobi Desert might have been like for Marco Polo.

A: Answers will vary.

moderate high/4

Lesson Tasks

A “Key” to the Empire

Students will read the article with a partner and then research the paiza and its history. Provide students with an oval-shaped cardstock upon which they will create their own paiza. What inscriptions would they include on their own paiza and why? What special privileges would having a paiza give them? Where

could they use them? Have them come up with possible activities in the classroom where they could use one. Have them think of modern-day objects, systems or privileges similar to the piazza. Ideas can include scannable technology (hotel key cards, mass transit passes, wristbands, cruise ship medallions, etc.).

English Language Learner: Provide these students with peer assistants as they read and complete the activities.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

A “Key” to the Empire

Q: What was engraved on the paiza?

A: Written on the paiza is a promise to death to any who did not obey it.

moderate low/2

Lesson Tasks

Verifiable Sources?

Graphic Organizers - Visual displays of facts, concepts or ideas. Used to guide students’ thinking as they fill it in and build upon it. Can be a chart, graph, diagram or web.

Circle Map: Students will fill in the center of the organizer with the title, “Marco Polo’s Travels”. In the outside circle, they will write as many of the things Marco Polo wrote about during his travels in China as they can find. After they have filled in the outside circle, they will go back and circle those things that are questionable. At the bottom of the page (the backside of the paper if needed), they will explain why the reliability of those items can be questioned. Students will use this edition of Studies Weekly as their source.

Gifted and Talented Learner: These students can create a picture display of all the items Marco Polo saw or brought back from his travels.

Teacher Questions/Discussion Prompts, Cognitive Complexity Levels

Verifiable Sources?

Q: ... [it was] so big in fact that its wings covered an extent of 30 paces, and its quills were 12 paces long, and thick in proportion. And it is so strong that it will seize an elephant in its talons and carry him high into the air, and drop him so that he is smashed to pieces.

Marco is describing a new bird. From this portion of the book, what do you read that proves Marco might exaggerate?

A: Answers will vary.

moderate high/4

Day 4 (40 minutes)

Goods of the Silk Road

Marco Polo’s Routes

Social Studies Standards Covered: 7.8.3

Vocabulary: transported, route, twisted

Lesson Tasks

Goods of the Silk Road

Students will complete the activity, Think & Review, Let's Write and the worksheet, "The Silk Road Game." They may work in groups or independently, and do the activities in the order they choose. The teacher should be available to assist when needed.

English Language Learner: Provide the students with either more time to complete the activities, modify the activities, or remove some of the activities so that the learner may focus on doing a complete job on only one activity. The teacher can read the questions aloud to students and verbally explain. As well, the students may be permitted to provide an oral, rather than written, response.

Lesson Tasks

Marco Polo's Routes

Provide the students with the necessary time to complete the map activity.

Below Level/Developing Learner: The teacher can read the questions aloud to students and verbally explain. As well, the students may be permitted to provide an oral, rather than written, response to the questions.

Let's Write Block

* indicates that prompt is featured in this week's Student Edition

Opinion: *Marco Polo traveled with his father and uncle to the Mongol Empire where they met Kublai Khan. Kublai Khan took a liking to the trio and insisted that they stay, which they did for 24 years. This would make Marco Polo one of the most famous explorers of all time. In your opinion, do you feel it was important for Marco Polo to have spent 24 years of his life away from home? Use details and information from this week's articles to help support your decision.

Informative Explanatory: The production of silk is an amazing process that has changed little over the years. Write an essay that explains the steps in sericulture. Do some research and add a drawing that shows the major steps. Add details about the countries who produce it and which ones use it the most.

Narrative: What might it have been like to journey across the Gobi desert with Marco Polo on his way to China? Describe some of the ways his expedition team might have been able to survive this harrowing journey.

Think & Review Questions

1. Why did some people find it difficult to believe the stories in Marco Polo's book?
2. What influenced young Marco Polo to be a world traveler?
3. What dangers did the Gobi desert present to travelers?
4. Why might Marco Polo not have mentioned the Great Wall of China after his 24-year journey?
5. Why was Marco Polo a prisoner?

Day 5 (40 minutes)

Weekly Technology Suggestion

The teacher may use this as a student product assessment and/or a replacement for the Weekly Assessment.

Take highlights and events from this week's articles and turn them into a multimedia presentation that can be presented to the class.

Assessment

To check for understanding, distribute the weekly assessment for students to complete independently. If time allows, you may choose to assign an extension activity to conclude the lesson.

Answer Keys

Activities

Goods of the Silk Road

Answers: Silk: China, Europe, shiny lightweight material from insects, clothing; China plates: China, Europe, well designed porcelain, eating/drinking; Tea: China, Europe, dried plant leaves, drink; Spices: Middle East, Europe & China, natural food flavorings, cooking; Paper: China, Europe, pressed plant fibers, writing material; Horses: Europe, China, four-footed animals, riding or pulling weight; Grapes: Europe, China, juicy fruit, drinking

Marco Polo's Routes

Answers:

Marco and his father and uncle took a more southerly route and intended to travel by water. They sailed on the South China Sea, through the Bay of Bengal, into the Indian Ocean, then into the Arabian Sea.

The boats they were to use looked to be in poor shape.

The Gobi desert stretches between Kashgar and Lanzhou.

As a tax collector he was sent to far-off cities.

Worksheets

Week 17 Worksheet 1

The Silk Road Game

There are no answers for this worksheet since it is an interactive game for students to role-play and live the Silk Road. Suggestion: Play a practice round so all students can become comfortable with the rules.

Week 17 Worksheet 2

Marco Polo's Journal

The year the students choose must correspond to the topic. For example, if the students journal regarding prison, then the year 1298 may be chosen. If the year 1271 is chosen, then the entry must discuss when he began his journey. Journals should include details and information from the text.

Week 17 Worksheet 3

The Adventures of Marco Polo

1. Marco Polo traveled by land going to China and by sea coming back to Italy; 2. Venice, Italy; 3. Acre in Israel; 4. Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, South China Sea, Bay of Bengal (or Indian Ocean), and Arabian Sea; 5. Quanzhou; 6. Western, Ceylon, India; 7. Istanbul

Assessment

1. Marco Polo may not have been the first to make the incredible journey, but it was his journey that became famous. Marco Polo was the person that documented his journey, brought back goods and ideas such as paper currency to Europe. It was this widespread fame that helped Europeans and the eastern countries of China and India begin to share ideas, culture and food as well as many other things.
2. D
3. B
4. Silk Road
5. royalty

- 6. C
- 7. B
- 8. C
- 9. B
- 10. The paiza was a golden tablet that offered protection to Marco Polo and his traveling companions. There was an inscription that promised death to anyone that did not obey it. The paiza was an all access pass to animals such as horses and camels when needed as well as lodging, food and guides were at their disposal. The paiza was able to grant the travelers anything they needed. Others wouldn't disobey for fear of the consequences.

Think and Review

- 1. Marco's stories were hard to believe because his descriptions of the Chinese way of life was so different from how the Europeans lived. He also stated things that were contrary to what Europeans already believed about China.
- 2. Both Marco's father and uncle had spent nine years traveling in China and their tales had a great influence on the young man.
- 3. little food and water; mirages and optical illusions to disorient travelers; extremes of heat and cold; sandstorms
- 4. It could be that Marco never saw the wall or much of it. At the time he was there it was not as enormous as it would eventually be.
- 5. After returning from China, Marco was captured while battling the Genoese.

Name: _____ Date: _____

California Studies Weekly

The Silk Road

Week 17 Assessment

For open response questions, you must cite the article you used for all or part of your answer. For example: I found part of the answer on page 1 in the article "Getting Information".

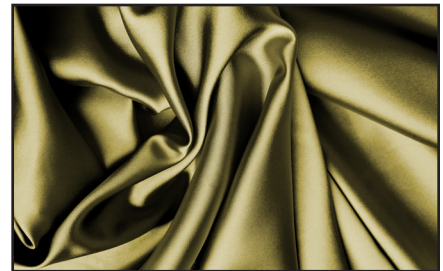
1. How did Marco Polo make an impact on history? 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Citation

2. Which two countries are estimated to harvest the most silk?

7.8, 7.8.3

- A. Persia and Mongolia
- B. China and Mongolia
- C. India and Persia
- D. India and China



3. What disadvantage did the Polos have since Kublai Khan liked them? 7.8.3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

- A. He wouldn't allow them to work.
- B. He wouldn't let them leave.
- C. He wanted them to America.
- D. He didn't allow them to travel.

4. The _____ was a very popular system of trade routes that helped bring Asia, Southern Europe, and East Africa together. Here they were able to trade goods, culture, and technology from east to west. 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3

5. By having the piazza, the Polos were treated like _____. 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

blank 1

- A. peasants
- B. royalty
- C. barbarians

6. Who was the author that convinced Marco Polo to author a book on his journey? 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5
- A. Rustichello of Venice
 - B. He decided on his own.
 - C. Rustichello of Pisa
 - D. Rustichello of Milan
7. What details prove to historians that Marco Polo actually traveled to China? 7.8, 7.8.3, 68REPOV3
- A. He was detailed in his description of salt and chopsticks
 - B. He was detailed in his description of money and salt.
 - C. He was detailed in his description of money and silk
 - D. He was detailed in his description of silk and salt.
8. What are the steps, in the correct order, of the process of silk making? 7.8.3, 68CST3
- A. thread, caterpillar, cocoon, eggs, cloth
 - B. cocoon, eggs, thread, cloth, caterpillar
 - C. eggs, caterpillar, cocoon, thread, cloth
 - D. caterpillar, cocoon, thread, cloth, eggs
9. How did Marco Polo convince Kublai Khan to permit him to travel back to Italy? 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5
- A. by promising to take a Mongol prince to his wedding in Persia
 - B. by promising to take a Mongol princess to her wedding
 - C. by promising to marry a Mongol princess
 - D. by promising to bring his bride gifts from Europe
10. How did the paiza help make the journey more comfortable for Marco Polo? 7.8, 7.8.3, 68CST3, 68REPOV3, 68REPOV5

Citation

Name: _____

Date: _____

California Studies Weekly

Worksheet 1 Week 17

The Silk Road Game

Get into 5 groups with 2 students to monitor trades. Create these goods for your group:

Group	Goods	Location
Group 1	Gold 5, Food 10	Rome
Group 2	Silver 7, Food 3	Which trading post are you?
Group 3	Food 10	Which trading post are you?
Group 4	Spices 7, Food 3	Which trading post are you?
Group 5	Silk 5, Food 10	China

Goal: The goal is for each group to end up with 1 gold, 1 (or more) silver, 1 (or more) spices, 1 silk.

Procedure: Each group creates their own goods cards. Distribute pieces of heavy paper for these. Keep the size relatively small but large enough to trade easily. Prior to the start of the game, check to make sure all goods have been created in the right quantity and category.

Groups get into position in a straight line. Group 1 is Rome. Group 5 is China. Groups 2, 3 and 4 are trading posts along the Silk Road. Begin trading.

Rules:

1. Each group can only trade with the group next to it. Example: Group 1 can only trade with Group 2. Group 2 can only trade with either Group 1 or Group 3.
2. Each turn, every group must throw away 1 food. (Food markers collected by the trade monitors.) If any group runs out of food, they starve and the game ends.
3. Items can only pass via trade. They cannot be given as gifts.
4. 1 turn: Each group can trade once each way if they can. Groups 1 & 5 can only trade once per turn as they only have one direction to go. Groups 2, 3 and 4 can trade once with each side.
5. Every third turn, the teacher (bandit) interrupts 1 trade so that trade does not get done. Nothing is taken away from the two groups involved, but no exchange of goods occurs.

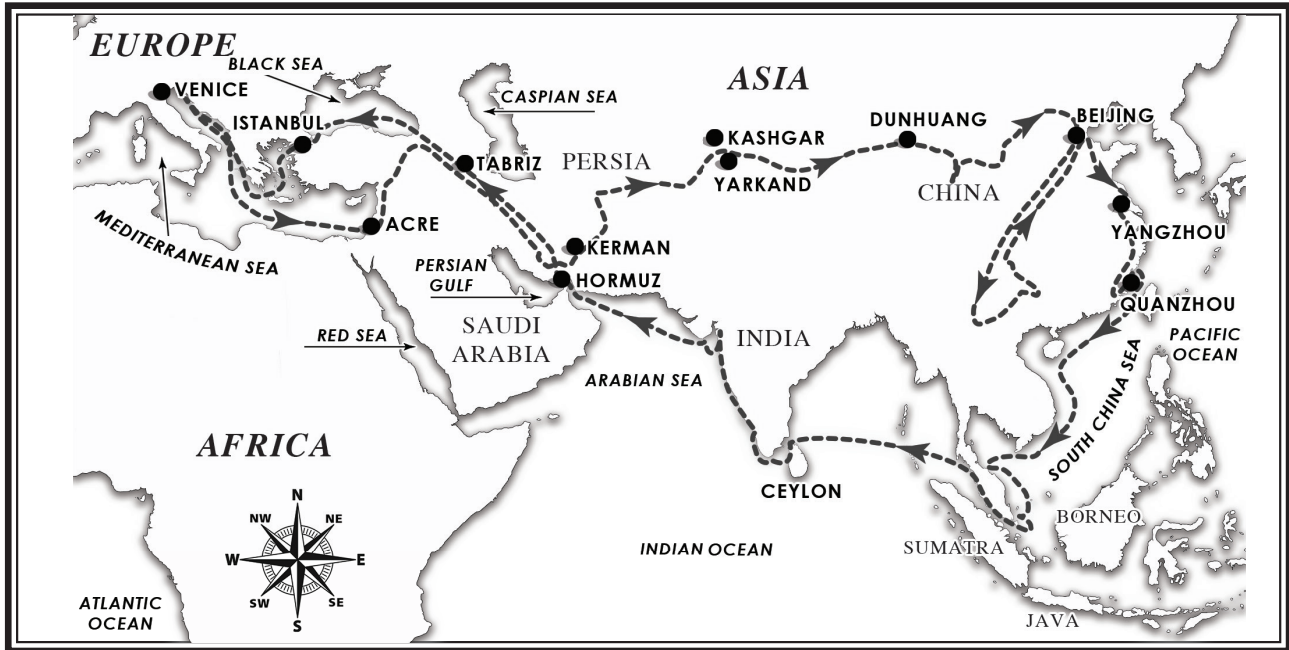
For time estimation: This game takes no more than 7 turns before a group dies or wins. If you think ahead, you should be able to win.

Name: _____

Date: _____

==== The Adventures of Marco Polo ====

Marco Polo was a famous Italian explorer who traveled extensively through the Mongol empires between 1271 and 1295. Use the map provided and additional resources if needed (library and internet) to explore Polo's routes and answer the following questions.



1. What was the noticeable difference between Polo's route to China and back to Italy?

2. According to the map, from what city did Marco Polo begin his journey?

3. After crossing the Mediterranean Sea, in what port city did Marco Polo land on his way to China?

4. Which bodies of water did Marco Polo use in his travels to China?

5. What encounter port city did Marco Polo spend time in before beginning his journey home?

6. Marco Polo traveled along the _____ coast of India after sailing between _____ and _____.

7. In what city of Turkey did Marco Polo stop on his way back to Italy?

