



## The Silk Road: An Ancient Internet

Students examine how goods and ideas moved along an ancient trade route between China and Europe.

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<b>Grade Level</b>	6-8
<b>Duration</b>	1-2 class periods

### National Geography Standards

**ELEMENT FOUR: HUMAN SYSTEMS**  
 11. The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on earth's surface.

**ELEMENT SIX: THE USES OF GEOGRAPHY**  
 17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.

### Arizona Geography Standards

**Grade 6**  
**Strand 4 Geography**  
**Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms**  
 PO 5 Interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, and databases depicting various aspects of world regions.  
 PO 4 Locate physical and human features (e.g., continents, significant waterways, mountain ranges, cities, countries) in the United States and in regions of the world on a map.  
**Concept 2 Places and Regions**  
 PO 3 Describe the interactions of people in different places and regions.  
**Concept 4 Human Systems**  
 PO 2 Describe the environmental, economic, cultural and political effects of human migrations and cultural diffusion on places and regions.  
 PO 4 Identify how factors such as river/coastal civilizations and trade that influence the location, distribution, and interrelationships of economic activities over time in different regions.  
**Grade 7**  
**Strand 4 Geography**  
**Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms**  
 PO 4 Locate physical and cultural features (e.g., continents, cities, countries, significant waterways, mountain ranges, climate zones, major water bodies, landforms) throughout the world.  
 PO 5 Interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, and databases depicting various aspects of the United States and world regions.  
**Concept 4 Human Systems**  
 PO 6 Describe the distributions and patterns of cultural characteristics (e.g., religions, language, standard of living) over time.  
 PO 7 Describe the factors (e.g., transportation routes, markets, raw

### Arizona Language Arts Standards

**READING STANDARD:**  
**Grade 6, 7 and 8**  
**Strand 1 Reading Process**  
**Concept 6 Comprehension Strategies**  
 PO 4 Use graphic organizers in order to clarify the meaning of the text.  
**Grade 6**  
**Strand 3 Comprehending Informational Text**  
**Concept 1 Expository Text**  
 PO 9 Draw valid conclusions about expository text, supported by text evidence.  
**Grade 7 and 8**  
**Strand 3 Comprehending Informational Text**  
**Concept 1 Expository Text**  
 PO 10 Make relevant inferences about expository text, supported by text evidence.

**WRITING STANDARD:**  
**Grade 6, 7, and 8**  
**Strand 2 Writing Components**  
**Concept 1 Ideas and Content**  
 PO 2 Provide content and selected details that are well suited to audience and purpose.  
 PO 4 Include ideas and details that show original perspective.  
**Concept 2 Organization**  
 PO 1 Use a structure that fits the type of writing (e.g., letter format, narrative, play, essay).  
 PO 5 Construct paragraphs by arranging sentences with an organizing principle (e.g., to develop a topic, to indicate a chronology).  
**Concept 4 Word Choice**  
 PO 2 Use words and phrases that consistently support style and type or writing.  
**Strand 3 Writing Applications**  
**Concept 2 Expository**  
 PO 1 Record information (e.g., observations, notes, lists, charts, map labels and legends) related to the topic  
 PO 2 Write a summary based on the information gathered that include(s):

- a topic sentence
- supporting details
- relevant information

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materials, and labor force) that influence the location, distribution and interrelationships of economic activities in different places and world regions.

## Grade 8

### Strand 4 Geography

#### Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms

PO 4 Locate physical and cultural features (e.g., continents, cities, countries, bodies of water, landforms, mountain ranges, climate zones) throughout the world.

PO 5 Interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, and databases depicting various aspects of the United States and world regions.

#### Concept 4 Human Systems

PO 4 Identify the factors (e.g., breakup of USSR, unification of Germany, cheap labor forces, outsourcing of services, oil industry) that influence the location, distribution and interrelationships of economic activities in different regions.

PO 7 Describe how changes in technology, transportation, communication, and resources affect economic development.

## Overview

For nearly 1500 years, a network of trade routes connected Asia with Europe. Over these routes traveled a myriad of goods, ideas, technologies, and cultures, much like on today's Internet. So valuable was the Silk Road that it was fought over by the Chinese, Turks, Mongols, and various nomadic tribes.

## Purpose

This lesson will raise student awareness of the level of movement of goods and ideas in the ancient world by examining the Silk Road.

## Materials

- book *The Silk Route: 7000 Miles of History* by John S. Major
- transparency of student copy of Silk Road Map
- student copies of Silk Road Map
- Silk Road transparency (routes are shown)

- transparency on which to create a chart of items going to Europe, items going to China, and items going both ways
- Silk Road Data Sheet (for teacher use only)
- Silk Road Assessment and Key
- Writing Prompt

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- make a chart of items, ideas, etc. that were transported along the Silk Road.
- map the main arteries of the Silk Road.
- speculate on how this trade impacted the people of the ancient world.
- write a paragraph describing the Silk Road.

## Procedures

1. Read the story, *The Silk Route*, to the students.
2. During the reading, ask students to do two things: connect the cities on their Silk Road maps to trace the route of the Silk Road, and record in chart form items that are traveling along that route.

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The chart should have three vertical columns. The headings will be: To Europe, To China, Both Places

3. Have students compare their maps with the transparency map and make corrections on their map.
4. Show students the transparency map of the Silk Road.
5. Create a master chart of the trade of goods on a transparency using student input; students can add items to their chart.
6. Share information from the Silk Road Data Sheet. Students may add information to their charts.
7. Discuss how this trade may have affected the people of the ancient world (Silk Road Data Sheet section in implications will help with this) and have students take notes on the back of their charts.

### Assessment

The students will do an assessment on the Silk Road that includes ten multiple-choice questions. Mastery will be considered 8 out of 10 correct.

They will write a paragraph using their chart, map, and notes as a reference. The paragraph will be

graded using the traits of ideas, word choice, and organization. Mastery will be considered 4 or higher on the 6 Traits Writing Rubric.

### Extensions

Have the students research one of the products that were “exotic” to the Europeans back in the time of the Silk Road.

Have the students create a short play using classmates as travelers, shopkeepers, and others associated with the Silk Road.

### Sources

*The Silk Route: 7000 Miles of History*, John S. Major, Harper-Collins Publishers, 1995 ISBN 0064434680

*Silk Road*, Grolin Electronic Publishing, Inc., 1993

*The Nomad Route: In the Steppes of Genghis Khan*. Aramco World, September/October, 1996

XINJIANG, Thomas B. Allen, National Geographic, March, 1996