

# The Silk Road

Jona Hall, Marietta Middle School



## **Synopsis:**

This lesson will take 2-3 days depending upon class time and student ability. The goal is for students to master the three academic content standards and be able to address the impact that the Silk Road played on the economy of so many ancient civilizations. Students will be introduced to the history and purpose of the Silk Road through the reading of the picture book and by being able to answer the essential questions introduced at the start of the lesson. To better understand the importance of the act of trading and bartering, students will complete the lesson by participating in a class trade game. The game will allow them to demonstrate the importance of depending upon each other to deliver goods to a final destination even when faced with adversity.

## **Academic Content Standards:**

1. Describe the enduring impact of early ancient civilizations. (History 7:2)
2. Explain how the Silk Road trade affected the cultures of the people involved. (People in Societies 7:2)
3. Describe the growth of cities and civilizations along trade routes. (Economics 7:2)

## **Essential Questions:**

1. Who first introduced the idea to trade with other civilizations?
2. What natural barriers did travelers/merchants face?
3. How did the Silk Road impact Ancient China and its economy?
4. How did the Silk Road impact the people?
5. Where was the route and how far did it go until reaching the final destination?
6. What contributions were given to the Chinese people?

## **Materials:**

1. The nonfiction picture book titled, The Silk Route.
2. Copies of the informative handout, *The History of the Silk Road*.
3. Data Disks for each student
4. The game the *Silk Road*
5. Silk Road maps for each student
6. Colored Pencils and Markers
7. Student binders / Journals

## **Activities:**

### Day One

1. Students will have some prior knowledge of the Silk Road due to reading a paragraph from their textbook, The Ancient World.
2. To review their prior knowledge we will complete a K.W.L chart to record what questions still remain. They will be guided to use the essential questions in adding to the "W" portion of the K.W.L chart.
3. To develop a better understanding the class will read the *The History of The Silk Road*. The handout will provide them with information that outlines the route itself, the affects on the economy, and the contributions it made to the Chinese civilization. Students will be allowed to take notes on the handout and highlight answers to the essential questions.

### Day Two

1. We will begin class by reading excerpts from the picture book titled, The Silk Route.
2. Students will review notes from the prior lesson as well as from the picture book to complete the "L" portion of the K.W.L.
3. Students will use the data disk to reflect on the main essential questions from the start of the lesson. They will use each section of the disk to answer the six questions and then add two additional points about the Silk Road that they feel are important. They will use the colored pencils and markers to draw pictures within each section representing the answers to the questions.
4. Students will have time to work on these during class and share their responses. If they do not complete the activity during the allotted class time they may take it home for homework.

### Day Three

1. Today students will be playing a trade game in class to represent the importance of communication and successful bartering to move goods acrossed the Silk Road.
2. Students will be broken down into five groups and read the directions for the game.
3. The game will take the entire class period to play. Students will have enough time to attempt successfully completing the game twice within the class period.
4. For homework, students will be asked to reflect upon the frustrations they faced and how they corrected the problems to successfully complete the task. They will also be asked to consider the frustrations faced by the traders that traveled the route so frequently. How did they perfect the

trade route and how did the other traders have to respond to the Chinese in order for the trade to be a success?

### **Assessment:**

1. Students will be evaluated upon successfully completing the K.W.L chart.
2. The data disks will be graded upon the individual student's ability to answer the essential questions within each section to show mastery of the content and of the academic content standards
3. The journal response will provide a broader understanding of the activity and the importance that each trader and trade post played in the success of using the Silk Road for the advancement of civilizations and economies all throughout the ancient civilization of Asia and Europe. Students will be graded on their grammar and complete sentence structure. They will also be graded upon the content and whether they fully understood the final lesson through reflecting upon the lesson as a whole.

### **Resources:**

The Ancient World. Needham, Massachusetts: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2003.  
140-145.

Donn, Don, and Lin Donn. Ancient China. Culver City, CA: Social Studies School Service, 2004.

Ebrey, Patricia B., Anne Walthall, and James B. Palais. Pre-Modern East Asia: to 1800. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Major, John S., and Stephen Fieser. The Silk Route. New York: Harper Collins, 1995.

Sargent, Marcia, and Wanda Baral. China. El Cajon, CA: Interaction, 1996.

<b>K</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>L</b>
What do I already know about the Silk Road?	What do I still want to know about the Silk Road? (Essential Questions)	This is what I have learned about the Silk Road.