



## NCTA Lesson Plan

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**Title:** Silk Road Simulation - how was Asia impacted by Europe and vice versa?

**Theme/Topic:** In-class simulation/impact of globalization on the Ancient/Medieval World

**Introduction (2-3 sentence summary of lesson):** I want to help my students develop an understanding for how important the Silk Road was towards impacting society in Rome and China, and how that impacted the development of the East and the West using a variety of documents and sources. And because I want to engage my students in the process, and help the information stick that much better, we will run a simulation of what it was like to trade on the Silk Road. Students will reflect on what they read, saw, and did during the lesson and will also have the opportunity to do some extension activities.

**Subject(s)/Grade level(s):** World History/7th

**Duration of lesson:** 2 days (estimate)

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**Connection to standards/common core (2-3 standards):**

7.E.MI.2 Analyze the relationship between supply and demand.  
7.E.ST.1 Explain the impact of supply and demand on the emergence of global markets. 7.E.ST.2 Analyze the impact of specialization upon trade and the cost of goods and services 7.E.ST.3 Explain how growing interdependence and advances in technology improve standards of living.  
7.E.ST.4 Analyze the interregional trading systems of the Americas, Africa, Asia and Europe between 600-1450.

**Essential Questions (2-3 questions):**

What can we take away about how the Silk Road impacted society in Europe and Asia?  
How might the Silk Road represent an early version of worldwide communication?

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### Learning Objectives (2-3 objectives):

- I can explain at least one reason how the Silk Road impacted Europe and Asia
- I can identify the influence of technological innovation and various empires during the time of the Silk Road trading routes.

**Materials Needed:** Student handouts, Whiteboard/smartboard, projector, cardstock placards for tables

**Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge:** *How will students show what they already know about the topic of this unit? What activities will be used?*

I plan to use a bell ringer question for my pre-assessment. A bell ringer gets my students thinking about what the lesson will be about, and gives me an opportunity to see what they might already know about the topic. The question and image that will be used are on the next page. Students will either write on their own paper and turn in their work, or they will be typing the response into a Google Form.



Bellringer activity (this image displayed on board using GoogleSlide)

1. What is one thing you notice about this map? What is one question you have about the image that you see? The red lines are routes that took people over land, and blue lines took people over sea.
2. Have you ever heard of the Silk Road? If so, what do you know about it?

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### Lesson Activities/Instructional Strategies (5-7 steps):

- Bellringer question; a warm up activity that students work on as soon as they enter the class. This is to get the students' brains starting to think about what we might be getting into during the lesson.
- Think-Pair-Share/Creating your own question after reading; students will have three short readings
  1. The Silk Road was not a single road, and it was not made of silk. It was a series of trade roads across Asia that stretched over 4000 miles, connecting Europe to Asia. Millions of people traded on these roads. Many goods were transported over the Silk Road. **What was the Silk Road?**
  2. It was silk that was wanted at first. The Romans were very interested in this beautiful, soft fabric, which was very different from the wools and linens they were used to. Merchants took coral, glass, gems, gold, ivory, precious metals, and textiles eastward to China and India. They also brought rare plants and animals such as falcons, gazelles, hunting dogs, leopards, lions, ostriches, parrots, and peacocks. Going back to Europe were traders with bronze, ceramics, cinnamon and other spices, furs, iron, and tea. **What were some of the things that were traded on the Silk Road?**
  3. Traveling this route was very dangerous for the caravans (*groups of camels or wagons together*). Harsh weather conditions are found along much of the Silk Road, from scorching deserts to freezing mountains. Travelers needed lots of water and could become sick. Probably the greatest danger faced by those traveling the Silk Road was thieves. A single camel could carry up to five hundred pounds of trade goods. To avoid thieves, caravans banded together and hired armed guards. As many as one thousand camels might be grouped together for the journey. Not all the members of the caravan would survive the trip. For this reason, many who traded on the Silk Road began using boats and going West! **What were the dangers of the Silk Road? What was the effect of the dangers of the Silk Road and the closing?**
- Provide students with work related to four questions; where were the Roman and Chinese Empires located? What did the Chinese know about the West? What did the Romans know about the East? How did the Romans and Chinese interact with one another? We will do a jigsaw - where each person within the group becomes an expert in each question. They complete each task, and come back and share what they did. This step will allow students to read primary source documents, look at maps, and get an idea of what goods were traded between the Romans and the Han Chinese Dynasty.
- Review answers and explanation of the rules of the simulation

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- Silk Road Simulation/Results/Final thoughts
- **Read the following definition and write the definition in your own words:**
- **Globalization is the connection of different parts of the world. Globalization results in the expansion of connecting, money, people, ideas, and things. As people, ideas, knowledge, and goods move more easily around the globe, the experiences of people around the world become more similar.**

In your own words - what is the meaning of globalization?

How does the Silk Road show globalization?

- Exit slip (Closing/Reflection Activity)

**Closing/Reflection Activity:** *How are students engaging with ideas from another culture? What does it mean for them?*

How did the Silk Road impact interactions and communication between the East and West - using the interactions between Rome and the Han Chinese? Think of the definition of globalization; think of an example of how we have a modern day Silk Road with other countries but especially in East Asia (China, Japan, Korea)?

**Post-Assessment:** *How will students demonstrate what they have learned about the topic from this unit? What activities will be used?*

Select 3-5 of the goods traded along the Silk Road. Explain the importance of each one by creating a brochure, powerpoint that is meant to get someone who is unfamiliar with your choice of products.

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**Extension Activities/Extending the Lesson/Cross-Curricular Connections (2-3 ideas):**

- Create a "travel magazine" advertisement of the items traded on the Silk Road
- Using National Geographic's "The Debate over Globalization" activity

## **NCTA Lesson Plan**

- Modified version of this lesson

<https://china.usc.edu/sites/default/files/USC%20East%20Asia%201800%20through%20Modern%20silk%20road%20project%20herskind%20final.pdf>

- <https://www.penn.museum/silkroad/home.php>