The Silk Road: Recording the Journey

China DBQ
The Silk Road was the world’s first superhighway. Not literally a single road, it consisted of a network of trade routes connecting China with Central Asia and lands beyond, all the way to Rome. Goods were usually transported by large caravans made up of guides, soldiers, religious pilgrims, merchants and hundreds of freight-bearing camels. The Silk Road flourished for more than 3,000 years and had a major influences on the cultures of Asia, Europe, and Africa. In this Mini-Q, you will examine several documents and then write five journal entries in the voice of a fictitious person traveling the Silk Road.
The Silk Road Documents

- Document A: The Silk Road Route (Map)
- Document B: The Dunhuang Caves
- Document C: Crossing the Gobi Desert
- Document D: The City of Marakanda
- Document E: Silk Road Ledger (chart)
Objective

- Students will be able to explain how people interact and are interconnected in the Eastern Hemisphere through the Silk Road.
- The purpose is for students to understand how the Silk Road influenced trade in the Eastern Hemisphere.
- This means students will be able to analyze different document about the Silk Road.
- History 2
Key Vocabulary

- Silk Road
- Export
- Domestication
- Caravans
- Dynasty
- Heyday
Hook Exercise:

• It’s time to make believe you are a traveler on the Silk Road.
• Choose the type of traveler you wish to be from the collection of descriptions on the following page.
• Give your traveler a name from the list in your packet.
Profile Sheet

- Fill out the profile of this person using the biographical information and your historical imagination
- **Name:** Qi Na (Chinese, f), Xin Qian (Chinese, f), Lee (Chinese, m), Pi Lin (Chinese, m), Yul (Sogdian, m), Chuluun (Mongolian, m)
- **Age at the time of the journey:**
- **Occupation:** (caravan leader, caravan guide, Han official, merchant, soldier)
- **Place of birth:** (choose an ancient city)
- **Marital status:**
- **Children:**
- **Reason for going on the Silk Road:**
- **Other personal information:**
Profile Sheet Example

- **Name**: Lee (Chinese, M)
- **Age at the time of the journey**: Not sure, about 35
- **Occupation**: merchant
- **Place of birth**: Chang’an, Song China
- **Marital status**: Wife is Li Nang
- **Children**: three
- **Reason for going on the Silk Road**: next slide
- **Other personal information**: I have been married for seven years and have three children. I realize that, if I travel the entire Silk Road, I will be away from my family for more than a year. I know that I will miss my family, but I convinced myself and my wife that the rewards of taking such a long trip will be worth the hardships. The primary good that I trade is silk, although I also trade other Chinese products, including iron and ceramics.
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Background Essay

- How long ago did trade between China and the Mediterranean region begin?
  ▫ About 4,000 years ago
- How did the domestication of the camel help the development of the Silk Road?
  ▫ Camels can carry heavy loads and travel long distances and require little water to do so.
- Why did trade along the Silk Road flourish during the time of the Song, Kushan, Sassanids, and Byzantine empires?
  ▫ The Han, Kushan, Parthian, and Roman empires increased the political stability in their regions and thereby made the Silk Road safer (cracked down on bandits because they wanted the goods).
- Why did the Chinese trade silk for horses from Ferghana? What did Emperor Wu-Ti think of them?
  ▫ The horses of Ferghana were superior to the horses bred in China. Wu-Ti called the horses “heavenly” and even wrote a poem about them.
- What was an important role of the Parthians in the Silk Road trade?
  ▫ The Sassanids acted as *middlemen* in trade between Rome and China and taxed all goods going through Parthia.
- What brought an end to the dominance of the Silk Road?
  ▫ The development of *sea routes* between Europe and Asia in the 1400s. 

Define these terms:

- Silk Road
- Export
- Domestication
- Caravans
- Dynasty
- Heyday
Define these terms:

- **Silk Road**: a vast OVERLAND trade network extending from China to the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Export**: sending goods to other countries or regions for sale or trade.
- **Domestication**: the process of making an animal accustomed to living with or near people.
- **Caravans**: large groups of people traveling together, usually with a lot of gear.
- **Dynasty**: a succession of rulers from the same family.
- **Heyday**: a time of great strength or success.
Timeline:

• About 4000 BCE- Silk cultivation begins in China
• About 2000 BCE- Trade between China and the Mediterranean region begins
• 206 BCE- The Han begin to rule China
• 27 BCE- The Roman Empire begins
• 1 CE-100 CE- Buddhism spreads along the Silk Road and reaches China
• 220 CE- The Han Dynasty is overthrown
• Early 400s CE- The Roman Empire collapses
• 1260-1295- Marco Polo travels along the Silk Road
• 1400s- Sea routes develop between Europe and Asia; the Silk Road declines
Understanding the task

• You will be writing five entries in a personal Silk Road Journal. One entry will be made after examining each of the five documents in the Mini-Q.
The Silk Roads in Han-Roman Times

Note: Goods and ideas spread across the Silk Road for centuries. This process of sharing is called “cultural diffusion” by historians. Below are a few examples of goods and ideas that moved by way of the Silk Roads. From China: silk, iron, bronze, ceramics, orange trees, paper, gunpowder, Confucianism

- From Central Asia: Ferghana Horses
- From Africa: Ivory, Rhinoceros Horn
- From India: Spices, Buddhism
- From Europe: Music, Glassward
Document A Analysis Questions

1. How far was it along the Silk Road from:
   - Chang’an to Dunhuang?
   - To Marakanda?
   - To Antioch?
   - To Rome?

2. The Silk Road crossed many types of terrain. What do you think was the most difficult terrain to travel across? Explain.

Writing Journal Entry #1

- Label your entry “Chang’an, April 5, 2--, Dawn. You are ready to head west from Chang’an, the easternmost city on the Silk Road. You look over the map to get a sense of what lies ahead of you. You will be taking the main Silk Road route, not the southern route. What difficulties do you think you will face? What else are you thinking as you wait to leave?”
Source: An excerpt describing the Taklimakan Desert in Encyclopedia, a natural history of Asia written in the early 1300s by Chinese historian Ma Twan-lin.

Note: In ancient times, the Taklimakan Desert was sometimes referred to as the Gobi. Today, as then, the temperature in the desert reaches over 100 F and rainfall is minimal.
Doc B Analysis Questions

1. Describe the interior of the cave shrine shown in the photograph.
2. What do the manuscripts found in the cave tell you about the concerns and interests of the travelers along the Silk Road?
3. What do the manuscripts tell about the homeland of the various Silk Road travelers?
Doc C: Gobi Desert
Document C Analysis Questions

• 1. Describe the climate of the Gobi Desert.
• 2. According to Ma Twan-lin, what guided Silk Road travelers through the Gobi Desert?
• 3. Why do you think road markers, such as the one in the photograph above, were set up in the Gobi Desert?
Because the oases were spaced further apart, the southern route of the Silk Road was more difficult to travel than the northern route. However, this difficulty made the southern route less popular with bandits. As a result, travelers often decided to take the southern route.
Document D: The City of Marakanda

Source: A description of the Kushan Empire city of Marakanda in Great Tang Records on the Western Regions, a book about the Silk Road written by Xuanzang, a Buddhist pilgrim, in 646 CE.

Note: After crossing the Gobi and Taklimakan deserts, travelers on the Silk Road’s northern route had to traverse the rugged Pami Mountains before arriving at the bustling city.

The precious merchandise of many foreign countries is stored here. The soil is rich and productive and yields abundant harvests. The forest trees afford a think vegetation and flowers and fruit are plentiful... horses are bred there. The inhabitant’s skill in the arts and trades exceeds that of other countries. The climate is agreeable and temperate and the people brave and energetic.
Document D: 
The City of Marakanda Analysis
Questions

• 1. What mountains did westbound Silk Road travelers have to cross before reaching Marakanda?
• 2. According to Xuanzang, Marakanda was a prosperous city. Why do you think it was prosperous?
• 3. Judging from the picture, how was Marakanda protected?
Note: After leaving Marakanda, Silk Road travelers continued west into the Parthian Empire. This prosperous region served as a bridge or “middleman” between the eastern lands and the Roman Empire. This final destination was the large city of Antioch, which marked the western end of the Silk Road. Below is a hypothetical but historically accurate list of goods you traded on your journey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Goods Given</th>
<th>Goods Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tunhuang</td>
<td>1 book of Confucian Lessons</td>
<td>1 book of Buddhist prayers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferghana</td>
<td>100 bolts of silk</td>
<td>200 Ferghana horses (pick up on return)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marakanda</td>
<td>10 ceramic vases</td>
<td>20 bags of Indian pepper (1 pound each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marakanda</td>
<td>10 bolts of silk</td>
<td>20 skeins of wool (from Eastern Europe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhague</td>
<td>500 seeds for orange trees</td>
<td>500 seeds for grape vines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmyra</td>
<td>50 sheets of paper</td>
<td>5 rhinoceros horns (from Ethiopia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioch</td>
<td>500 bolts of silk</td>
<td>Unspecified amounts of gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioch</td>
<td>50 bars of iron</td>
<td>30 roman colored glass vases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Lost in Gobi Desert: 1 camel and driver carrying 30 bolts of Chang’an silk
Document E Analysis Questions

1. What region acted as a middleman in the trade between the Byzantine and Song empires?

2. Do you think the Song Officials would be pleased about trading 100 bolts of silk for 200 horses?

3. Review the map in Document A. How do you think pepper got to Marakanda? How do you think wool got there?

4. Review the map. How do you think the silk bought in Antioch got to Rome?
Bucketing- Getting Ready to Write

• Look over all the documents and organize them into your final buckets.
• Write bucket labels under each bucket and place the letters of the documents in the buckets where they belong.
  ▫ It is OK to put a document in more than one bucket. That is called multi-bucketing, but you need a good reason for doing so.
  ▫ Remember, your buckets will become a journal entry.

Departure
Further Organization of Your Journal

• After copying the five lines under your buckets, write the date of each of the entries to be made in your journal. Dates should be specific. The time can be exact or more general, such as morning or evening.
• Entry #1 ____________________
• Entry #2 ____________________
• Entry #3 ____________________
• Entry #4 ____________________
• Entry #5 ____________________
If you need assistance, raise your hand and wait for me to come to you. You may also come to the front table to scroll through this presentation for help on any part of the DBQ packet.

¡Buena suerte!

ごんばって！ (Gambatte!)

גليك! (Glik!)

Good luck!
Homework:

Students are to fill out the Outline Guide Sheet and write their rough draft of their journal entries.
Conducting an In-Class Writing Workshop
Homework: students are to take their edited journal entries and write their FINAL journal entries.

DUE: Tuesday, Dec. 16 at the beginning of class