

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 1 • 6

Traveling on the Silk Road

Rjurik Davidson



Series Editor Rob Waring

**Seed
Learning**



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The Longest Road in the World

Today we travel the world easily. Cars, trains, and planes take us quickly from city to city. Thousands of years ago, it was different. There was only one way to travel from Europe to Asia. It was called the Silk Road.

Camels on the Silk Road



A map of Marco Polo's trip



An old tower on the Silk Road

In fact, the Silk Road was made up of many roads. They passed through many different places like deserts, rivers, mountains, and forests. The Silk Road dates from about 100 BC.



Silk Road terrain

A Hard Trip

Traveling on the Silk Road was very hard. The best way to travel along the Silk Road was by camel. Many people used horses, too. Others, the less fortunate travelers, had to walk.



Horses on the Silk Road today

Taking Things to Sell

Most people traveling on the Silk Road were bringing things to sell. They carried many different things, but the most famous was silk. Silk is a material that is soft and used for making clothes.



Making thread

Camels on the Silk Road today

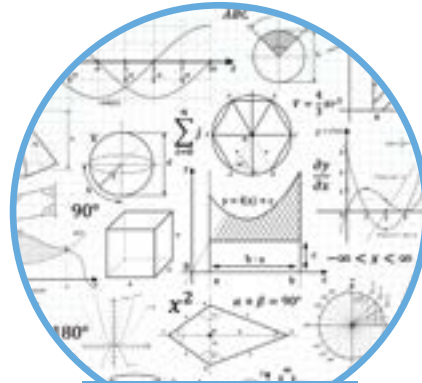


The selling of traditional handicrafts, the Kyrgyz Republic



And Carrying Ideas, Too

The Silk Road was also important for carrying ideas. Philosophies like Buddhism and mathematics were carried from country to country. This was the easiest part because ideas are easy to carry! Anyone can do it!



Mathematical symbols



A statue of Buddha

The Capital of China

Many people started their journey along the Silk Road in China. At the eastern end of the Silk Road was Xian. This was the capital of China at the time. It was also the starting point for most travelers. Xian had all the comforts of a big city. There was food to eat and water to drink. It was a good place for travelers to prepare for the next part of their journey.



Xian City Wall



Xian tower and wall

Comprehension Questions

1. What was the Silk Road?
 - (a) A road made out of silk
 - (b) An important road from Europe to Asia
 - (c) A road in a country called Silk
 - (d) A road named after a man called Silk
2. What was carried along the Silk Road?
 - (a) Items to sell
 - (b) Silk
 - (c) Ideas
 - (d) All of the above
3. What were some of the dangers on the Silk Road?
 - (a) Dangerous animals
 - (b) The weather and bandits
 - (c) Getting lost
 - (d) A man called Marco Polo
4. Why was Samarkand famous?
 - (a) It had lots of water.
 - (b) It had many caves.
 - (c) It had lots of culture.
 - (d) It was very large.
5. Why did the Silk Road end?
 - (a) The road was too difficult.
 - (b) There were too many bandits on the road.
 - (c) There was not enough water along the road.
 - (d) Ships became a safer and quicker way to travel.
6. Where did Marco Polo travel?
 - (a) Mogao
 - (b) On the Silk Road
 - (c) Samarkand
 - (d) Xian
7. Which idea was probably NOT carried on the Silk Road?
 - (a) Mathematics
 - (b) Trains
 - (c) Buddhism
 - (d) Science
8. What is silk?
 - (a) A road
 - (b) A kind of animal
 - (c) A cloth
 - (d) A new idea
9. Life on the Silk Road was...
 - (a) easy.
 - (b) dangerous.
 - (c) fast.
 - (d) fun.
10. Most people traveled...
 - (a) by ship.
 - (b) on foot.
 - (c) by night.
 - (d) by animal.

Glossary

- **bandit** a robber who belongs to a gang
- **Buddha** the founder of the religion of Buddhism
- **cave** a natural underground room in a hill or cliff
- **century** a period of 100 years
- **desert** a landscape that is very dry
- **handicrafts** things made by hands
- **Marco Polo** a famous Italian traveler
- **rob** to steal money or property
- **Samarkand** a city in the country of Uzbekistan
- **silk** material made from silk worms
- **Xian** the capital city of China during the Han Dynasty