

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 1 - 60

The Great Wall of China

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Seed
Learning



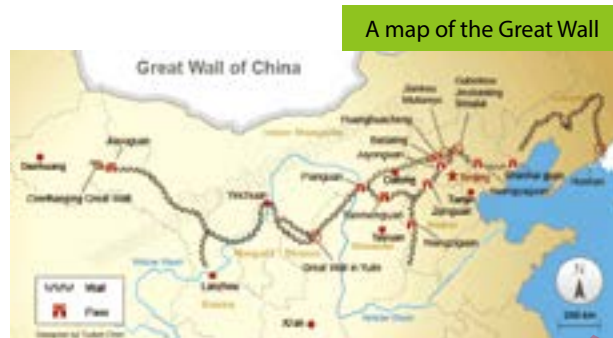
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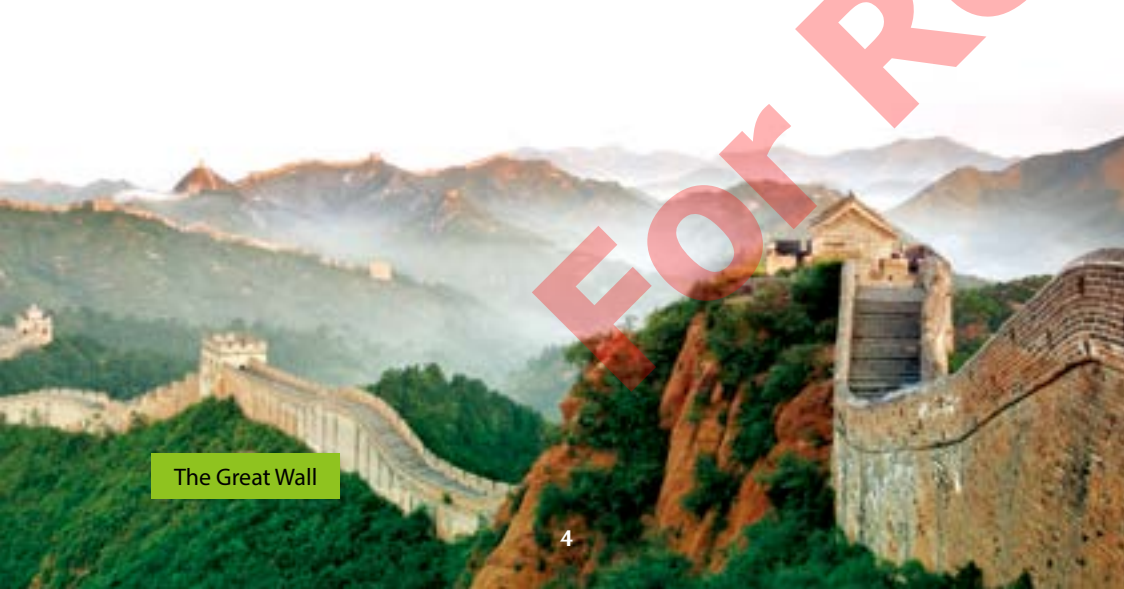
The Great Wall

It is said the Great Wall of China is the only man-made object we can see from the International Space Station.

Why do we call it “great?” And why would anyone want to build a wall this long?



A map of the Great Wall



The Great Wall

The Long Wall of 10,000 Miles

The Great Wall stretches from the ocean at Old Dragon's Head at Shanhaiguan on China's eastern coast to Jiayuguan in the western desert. In Chinese, it is known as “the long wall of 10,000 miles.”

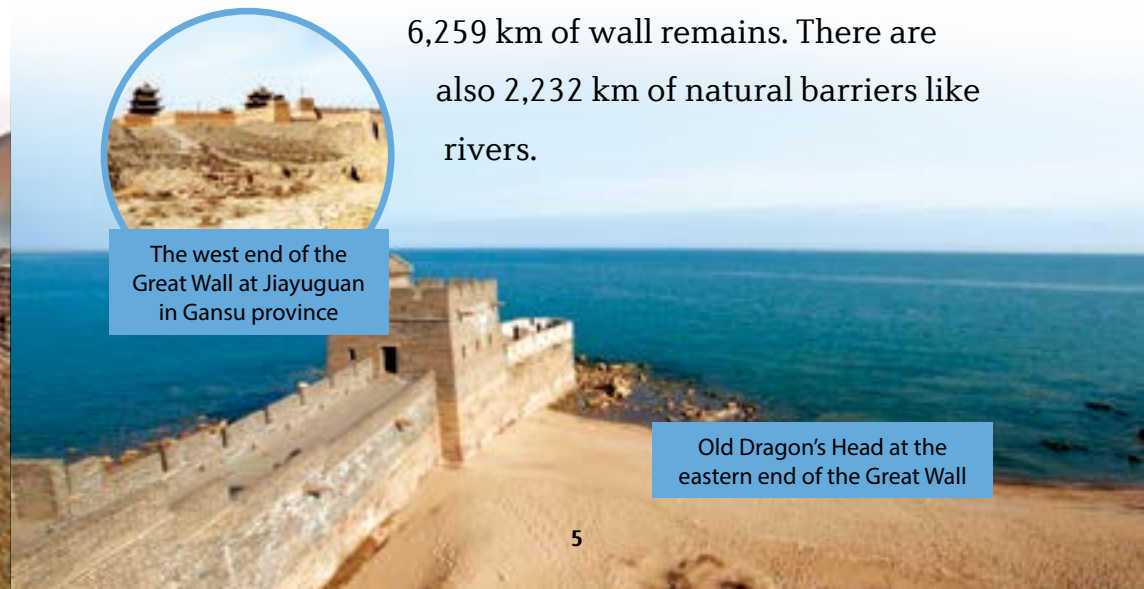
The Great Wall was built over many years. Many people think it is one long wall, but it is actually many walls. If we count all its parts, the Great Wall is about 21,196 km long. But today, only about 6,259 km of wall remains. There are also 2,232 km of natural barriers like rivers.



The Great Wall crosses mountains, forests and rivers.



The west end of the Great Wall at Jiayuguan in Gansu province



Old Dragon's Head at the eastern end of the Great Wall

Ancient China

The story of the wall starts over 2,700 years ago. At that time, ancient China was not one country, but many small states, each with its own leader. And these states were not friendly to each other.

People in the south and middle of China were worried about people from the north coming to take their lands, so they decided to build a wall to protect themselves.



A map of Ancient China



Terracotta soldiers near Xian, China

Building the Wall

Although construction of the wall was started 2,700 years ago, it was Emperor Qin who started the first major building of the wall in about 221 BC. But the wall was not well-built, and soon a lot of the wall was falling down.



Qin Shi Huangdi,
China's first emperor

關羽

Guan Yu, a general
of the Han dynasty



A drawing of an ancient Chinese soldier



Much of the wall fell down.



Part of the Great Wall



Some parts of the wall have disappeared completely.

Over hundreds of years, many people tried to rebuild the wall.

The Northern Wei dynasty (386-534 AD) repaired the existing wall to defend itself against attacks.

Then the Bei Qi kingdom (550-577) built, or repaired, more than 1,400 km of wall. The Sui dynasty (581-618) repaired and extended the Great Wall a number of times.



The original wall was often made of earth.



Repairing the Great Wall

Comprehension Questions

1. They say that the Great Wall can be seen from...
 - (a) the International Space Station.
 - (b) Europe.
 - (c) Jupiter.
 - (d) tall mountains.
2. What is at the western end of the Great Wall?
 - (a) China's largest city
 - (b) The ocean
 - (c) The Yellow River
 - (d) A desert
3. The Great Wall...
 - (a) is one long wall.
 - (b) is many short walls.
 - (c) was built recently.
 - (d) is like a dragon's head.
4. People first started building the Great Wall...
 - (a) to grow rice.
 - (b) for protection.
 - (c) to keep animals out.
 - (d) for their god.
5. What is true about the early parts of the Great Wall?
 - (a) They were very weak.
 - (b) They were mostly made of earth.
 - (c) They often fell down.
 - (d) All of the above
6. Why was the Great Wall built?
 - (a) To protect travelers and collect taxes
 - (b) To stop attackers
 - (c) To create a road
 - (d) All of the above
7. Which of these people were NOT mentioned as builders of the Great Wall?
 - (a) 300,000 soldiers
 - (b) Women and children
 - (c) Local people
 - (d) People who disagreed with the emperor
8. How much of the wall can be seen today?
 - (a) 300,000 meters
 - (b) 30%
 - (c) 10,000 miles
 - (d) 100%
9. Which of these is NOT part of the Great Wall?
 - (a) Bridges
 - (b) Watchtowers
 - (c) Tunnels
 - (d) Paths
10. Why is the Wall "great"?
 - (a) It is still important for protecting China.
 - (b) It is a great road in China.
 - (c) It is great place to learn about Chinese culture and history.
 - (d) All of the above

Glossary

- **attacker** a person who hurts or tries to hurt someone
- **collapse** to fall down, sometimes breaking into pieces
- **cross** to go from one side to the other
- **dynasty** a series of rulers or leaders who are all from the same family, or a period when a country is ruled by them
- **extend** to make longer or bigger
- **materials** things like earth or sand used to build things
- **object** a thing that is not alive
- **punishment** the penalty or rough treatment given to someone for doing something wrong or bad
- **remain** to still be there
- **repair** to build or make again something that was damaged
- **souvenir** something you buy or keep to remember a special time or trip
- **state** an area of land with its own government
- **stretch** to reach from one place to another
- **tourist sight** a place often visited by tourists