

More Chinese History

China was reunited under the Sui (SWAY) dynasty (DIE-nuh-ree) (A.D. 581-618). During this reign, transportation advances were made. For example, to make it easier to cross wide rivers, long suspension (suh-SPEN-shuhn) bridges were constructed. Such bridges hung in the air, supported by enormous iron chains.

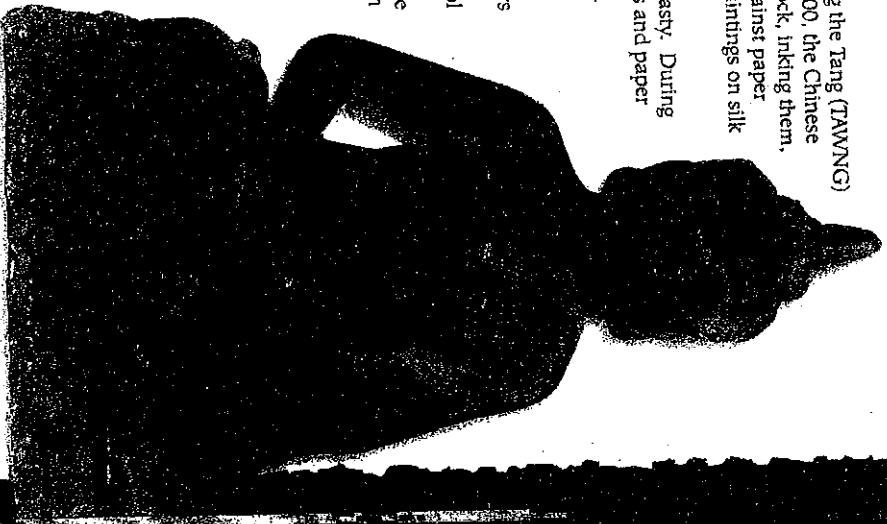
Other achievements occurred during the Tang (TAWNG) dynasty (A.D. 618-907). Around A.D. 700, the Chinese started printing by carving wooden blocks, inking them, and then pressing the damp blocks against paper scrolls. They also created beautiful paintings on silk scrolls.

Next came the Song (SOUNG) dynasty. During this time, China invented the compass and paper money.

The Mongols Conquer China

The Mongol (MAWN-guh) invaders (in-YADE-uhz) attacked after the fall of the Song dynasty. They had control of China from A.D. 1279 to 1368. The Mongols held much of Eastern Europe as well. During this time, people from many places journeyed to and from China.

A man named Genghis Khan (jen-guhns-KAWN) began the Yuan (YVAVYN) dynasty. Khan was the first man to rule China who was not Chinese. He ruled the largest land empire in history and encouraged trade between Europe and China.



The Ming Dynasty

Zhu Yuanzhang (OO you-AHN-jahng) led a revolt that overthrew the Mongol rulers and established himself as the first emperor of the Ming dynasty. This dynasty created an impressive navy.

The Forbidden City was constructed during this reign. It took more than a decade to erect. Surrounded by a wide moat and high walls, the Chinese emperor and his family lived within the city. Common people could not enter its red walls.

The End of the Chinese Dynasties

China's last dynasty, the Manchu (MAAN-choo), held power from 1644 to 1911. During this time, China expanded its borders. Europeans traded with China, but there was only one port open for trading. The Chinese did not import many goods and the Europeans disliked such limited trade with China. The treaty of Nanking forced China to open more ports. However, the forced trading damaged the Chinese economy, and the Taiping Rebellion (TIE-ping-yih-BEL-yuhn) occurred. A rebellion is an armed fight against the government. More rebellions followed. These battles eliminated the Chinese dynasties.

Modern China

In 1912, the Republic of China was founded. The two most powerful groups in the nation had different ideas. The Nationalist Party believed that people should have control over their lives. The other group, the Communist Party, wanted the government to control everything.

In 1934, the Nationalists fought the Communists. The victorious Communists took over mainland China and formed The People's Republic of China. This government leads China today.



Comprehension Question

How do you think opening China's ports affected the world?

Ancient China

The first Chinese settled in the Yellow River Valley. They were farmers and craftsmen. In addition to crops, they produced pottery and silk. The mountains along China's border kept it separate from other civilizations (siv-uh-luh-ZAY-shuhnzh), so there was little trade during this time.

When one family holds all the power in a nation, it is called a dynasty (DIE-nuhs-tee). The first society was the Xia (she-AH) dynasty, which lasted from about 2000 to 1600 B.C.

The Shang Dynasty

The Shang dynasty reigned from around 1600 to 1046 B.C. Its people used bronze to make tools and wheels. They also produced the oldest Chinese writings ever found. The people left records by carving words on animal shells and bones called oracle (OR-uh-kuhl) bones.

Long-Lasting Zhou Dynasty

The Zhou (IO) dynasty reigned for 900 years—the longest dynasty in Chinese history. This dynasty kept extensive written records. The late Zhou emperors grew weak and could not control the people. Smaller states broke away, and their armies fought against each other. Soon civil war erupted, and thousands of men perished in bloody battles. The Chinese countryside was destroyed.

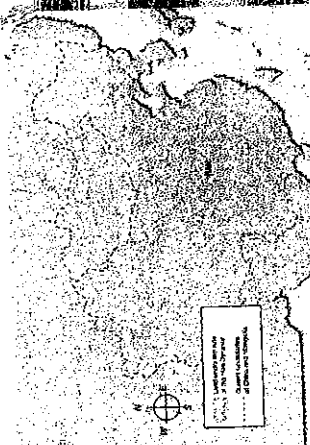
During this time a man named Confucius (kuhn-FYOO-shuhs) was a philosopher who wanted to understand existence and its meaning. He believed that family was of supreme importance. Confucius taught that everyone should be honest, work hard, and obey rules.

Short but Sweet: The Qin Dynasty

The Qin (CHIN) dynasty gained power after the Zhou's fall. Their reign only lasted about 15 years, yet Emperor Qin Shi Huang (CHIN SHE HWANG) accomplished much in this time. He ended the constant battling by unifying the nation. Qin took control of all of China. He formed a centralized government.

Over the years, other leaders had built walls to protect their territories. Emperor Qin decided to join these walls and make them longer, forming the basis of what became the Great Wall of China. Emperor Qin established standard weights and measures and made written language uniform. To connect towns, he had roads and canals constructed.

Qin wanted a magnificent tomb that displayed his power and significance. Thus, he had artists create over 7,000 life-sized terra-cotta (tear-ruh-KAWT-tuh) (red clay) warriors to stand guard over his tomb.



Prosperous Han Dynasty

After Qin died, his sons lost control. The Han (HAWN) dynasty took over. It lasted from 206 B.C. to A.D. 220 and was one of the strongest in Chinese history. During the Han reign, China was the largest country in the world, with a population of 60 million. The great Silk Road, a trade route forming the first link between Asian and European nations, was completed during this time.

Once the powerful Han dynasty crumbled, wars occurred. Barbarians (hawt-BER-ee-uhnz), uncivilized people who had no culture, seized control of the northern part of China. Different rulers controlled parts of southern China.

Comprehension Question

How did the dynasties impact Chinese history?

Ancient China**NAME**

1. Where did the first Chinese settle?	1.
2. What were the professions of the early Chinese?	2.
3. What physical feature prevented trade?	3.
4. What is a dynasty?	4.
5. What was the first dynasty? When?	5.
6. How do we know about the Shang dynasty?	6.
7. What was the longest dynasty in Chinese history? How long?	7.
8. What happened to the Zhou dynasty?	8.
9. Who was Confucius?	9.
10. What did Confucius believe?	10.
11. What were 6 accomplishments of the Qin dynasty?	11.
12. "Who" guarded Qin's tomb?	12.
13. What was one of the strongest dynasties? Why?	13.
14. What was the great Silk Road?	14.
15. What brought an end to the Chinese dynasty?	15.

MORE CHINESE HISTORY**NAME**

1. How did the Sui dynasty reunite China	1.
2. What were the accomplishments of the Tung dynasty?	2.
3. What were the inventions of the Song dynasty?	3.
4. What group invaded Chan after the fall of the Song dynasty?	4.
5. Who was Genghis Khan?	5.
6. Who was Zhu Yuanzhang?	6.
7. What were two achievements of the Ming dynasty?	7.
8. What was the Forbidden City?	8.
9. What was the last dynasty? Why?	9.
10. Why did the Chinese dynasties come to an end?	10.
11. What type of government does China have today? What does this mean?	11.