THE SILK ROAD HISTORY LAB

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SCHOOL: Deerfield High School
SUBJECT AREA(S): Geography, History
GRADE LEVEL: High School

STATE GOALS
- 16 Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
- 17 Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.

OBJECTIVES
- Students spend class moving through a series of stations, each representing a city and highlighting a different aspect of civilization and movement along the Silk Roads. Stations are designed with variety and diversity of activities in mind. As students move through the stations, they create travel logs and posters that serve as records of their virtual journeys.

MATERIALS/RESOURCES
BEIJING: Mongol Impact on the Silk Road
Through maps, quotes, and secondary source excerpts, students examine the Mongol impact on the Silk Roads.
- Maps and information on Mongols & the Silk Road

TAXILA: Spread of Buddhism
Students analyze Asoka’s Edicts for Buddhist influence and also view and analyze Buddhist artwork.
- Asoka’s Edicts documents
- Tables/chairs to represent Shaolin Temple

SAMARKAND: Marketplace
Students use a jigsaw method to read about how goods were traded in a marketplace and have a hands-on experience with fabrics and spices.
- Turkish Kilim rug
- Goods (fabrics, spices, silk worm)
- CD-player & music (Play Yo-Yo Ma and The Silk Road Ensemble)

PROCEDURES
1. Divide class into three sections, each assigned a city: Beijing, Taxila or Samarkand. Each group answers questions on one of the worksheets below (Worksheet 1, 2, or 3) that corresponds to their city.
2. Have students assemble the Beijing, Taxila and Samarkand stations using Materials/Resources listed above.
3. Distribute Group Travel Log Instructions worksheet (below) to entire class with instructions for students to follow, directing them to rotate through the three stations and create travel logs and posters.
5. Have the class as a whole work on the Follow-Up Activity, following instructions and answering questions on Worksheet 4.

WORKSHEET 1
Beijing: Mongol Impact on the Silk Road

1. Read the article “The Silk Road: A Larger View” online at <http://www.asiasociety.org/arts/monksandmerchants/silk.htm>. Then research the Mongol Empire. In one or two sentences, please explain whether you believe the Mongols were interested in free trade along the Silk Roads.

2. After looking at the maps of the Mongol Empire, write a one-to two-sentence reflection on how the Empire’s size might impact trade on the Silk Roads.

3. In one or two sentences, explain how Mongol tactics and fear of their warriors might enhance security along the Silk Roads. Consider the quotes of Mongol leaders and select one or two that help illustrate how the Mongols helped encourage trade.
WORKSHEET 2
Taxila: Spread Of Buddhism

1. Find the city of Taxila on a map of the Silk Road (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxila). This is your current stopping place. According to this map, what important structures are very close to Taxila? Think back about your studies of Mauyran India. Why are these objects important?

2. Now, read the primary document at your station- the Edicts of Asoka (this can be found in the book “Readings in World History”). As you learned earlier, Asoka was famous for his religious tolerance. What passages from the document indicate this belief in religious tolerance? Write at least two passages below.

3. Asoka was also famous for his conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism. In which edicts do you see evidence of his Buddhist beliefs?

4. In spite of the fact that Asoka’s Edicts were not exclusively Buddhist, in what ways did the Edicts help spread Buddhism? Think about the location of the various Edicts or Pillars, the leadership of Asoka, etc.

5. Examine the rubbing from the Buddhist Temple and the images you have seen of Buddhist art in China. Make a list of the characteristics of Buddhist art.

6. One of the characteristics of Buddhism is its ability to adapt to fit with value systems of other cultures. How did the Chinese adapt Buddhist art to their culture? Use specific examples from works of art.

WORKSHEET 3
Samarkand: Marketplace

1. Find out through readings how were how goods were traded in marketplaces on the Silk Road.
2. Locate Samarkand on a map and find information on its place in the history of the Silk Road.
3. Make a list of goods that might have been traded in the marketplace in Samarkand. Describe the smells and textures of a Silk Road marketplace based on the goods traded there. Select two items that were traded and explain why they had value in the marketplace.
GROUP TRAVEL LOG
INSTRUCTIONS

Imagine you are a traveler on the Silk Roads. Working with your group, develop a personality for yourself. Are you a Buddhist monk? A Mongol? A trader from India in search of coveted silk? Together, write a travel log of your journey. There should be the same number entries as there are members of your group; each person in the group should write one entry. The entries should be two to three paragraphs in length and each entry should contain at least five facts. Facts include: accurate dates, real places, and researched details. (Example: “I am traveling through the Taklimakan Desert now, which is just north of my homeland.”) You should also specify what city you are in or traveling to in each entry.

Then create a poster to display these travel log entries. Your poster should include your entries and a map of the Silk Roads, including the location of your entry stops. Use other visuals (drawn or printed up pictures, etc.) to help illustrate your journey. Be creative with your posters.

The entries should be typed and follow all world history standards.

Be creative and have fun!

(Note: The worksheet at the end of this unit ["Travel Log: Silk Road Adventure"] can be used as a cover for each Travel Log)
Divide the class into six sections. Each section will be responsible for reading one of the six Parts of the text “The Dynamics of Trade Along the Silk Road” (in the SPICE Curriculum Manual “Along the Silk Road”) and answering the question below whose Part number corresponds to their section number. The class will have three minutes to read and prepare the answer to their question.

Questions

Part 1. What were the three major sections on the Silk Road? What happened in each section?

Part 2. Why do we say that trade along the Silk Road resembled a chain? How would you describe the kind of trading that happened along the Silk Road?

Part 3. What did a trader need in order to start a trade expedition? What did he do to avoid losing money?

Part 4. How would a trader travel? Describe the places he would go to trade his goods.

Part 5. What goods were traded along the Silk Road? Who were the peoples involved in the Silk Road Trade?

Part 6. Who profited from successful trading? How did trading contribute to rich cultural exchange along the Silk Road?
TRAVEL LOG

Silk Road Adventure

Traveler’s Name: ________________________________