China’s Flourishing Civilization
What topographical features are present and not-present on this map would influence China’s development?
Ancient China had two major river systems:

- Huang He which is also known as the Yellow River
- Yangtze which is also known as the Chang Jiang.
Major River Systems

• The Huang He River system 3,000 miles long
• Empties into the Yellow Sea
• Ancient Chinese civilization began along this river
• Provides fertile soil and an abundance of food
• Formerly known as the “river of sorrow”

Why did it get such a name?
Major River Systems

The Yangtze River System

- Longest in China and the third longest river in the world - 3,964 miles long.
- The river passes through some of China's best farmland and many of its towns and villages.
Ancient China's Topography

Topographical features that lead to isolation:

- **Gobi Desert**: one of the driest in the world enter and you shall never return!

- **Plains**: Only about 12% of China's land is plains; most of that is in the eastern part of China.
China’s Topographical Features

- Himalayas: 43% of China’s land is mountainous!
- Tibetan Plateau: very isolated region even today!
Impact of China’s Geography

How would isolation help a country?
What other great ancient civilizations were isolated?
Impact of China’s Geography

1. Long distances and physical barriers isolated China, blocking cultural diffusion

2. Protecting China from invasion

3. Isolation contributed to the Chinese belief that China was the center of the earth and the only civilization.
## Timeline of Chinese Dynasties

### Ancient China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynasty</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>ca. 12000 - 2000 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xia</td>
<td>ca. 2100-1800 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shang</td>
<td>1700-1027 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Zhou</td>
<td>1027-771 B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Zhou</td>
<td>770-221 B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qin</td>
<td>221-207 B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western Han</td>
<td>206 B.C.- 9 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsing (Wang Mang)</td>
<td>9-25 A.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Han</td>
<td>25-220 A.D.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Mystery Dynasty: Xia

For many years, the Xia (shee-uh) Dynasty was thought to be a part of a myth that the Chinese tell as part of their history. The Xia Dynasty was in oral histories, but no archaeological evidence was found of it until 1959.

Xia Dynasty (2205-1806 B.C.)
Evidence finally uncovered...

- Despite this new archaeological evidence of the Xia, they are not universally accepted as a true dynasty.

Xia Dynasty (2205-1806 B.C.)
Evidence finally uncovered...

• The founding of the Xia dynasty (2200-1766 BCE), according to Chinese tradition, reveals the value the Chinese have put on leadership...

• Xia Yu, the founder of the Xia dynasty, was selected as the heir to the throne because he was able to control the Great Flood that had afflicted the Chinese for several years.
• Xia Yu was selected as the heir to the throne because he was able to control the Great Flood that had afflicted the Chinese for several years.

• ...Even though he was not the son of the Emperor and even though his own father had been executed because he could not control the flood.
Daily Life

1. The Xia were agrarian people

2. The ruling families used elaborate and dramatic rituals to confirm their power to govern.

3. The rulers often acted as shamans, communicating with spirits for help and guidance.
Was He the Last Emperor???

• Xia Jie was the last emperor of the Xia Dynasty. As a hedonist & a notorious tyrant, the people under his reign were driven into great disaster.

• He ordered 3,000 to their deaths by demanding they jump into a lake of wine, just for entertainment!
Xia Dynasty Banished!

At last, a feudal lord named Shang Tang led the people against this tyrant and banished him from the capital.

Shang Tang
Chinese civilization took shape under the...

**Shang Dynasty**

1650 B.C.–1027 B.C.

*What is needed to have a civilization?*
Oracle Inscriptions
Writing had begun...
The Shang Dynasty

• First writing system: The first dynasty in China according to written records is the Shang – complete writing system!

• However, few in China would learn to read and write!

Writing of the Shang on a tortoise shell.
Chinese Writing

Video Available Only In Class
Chinese Civilization took shape under The Shang Dynasty

- Many Chinese were accomplished artisans and artists

Most advanced bronze workers in the ancient world!
The Shang Dynasty

- A class system and division of labor developed during this dynasty:
  nobles, artisans, peasant farmers and slaves
More Shang Contributions

- Discovery of tin & copper
- Bronze weapons are cast.
- Horse-drawn chariots are used.
Shang Contributions

• Cowries shells (snails which inhabit the Pacific and Indian Ocean) served as money before bronze coins were produced.

• Silk thread is invented! Loved by the world, even to today,
Silk Making and the Silk Road!

- Discovered how to make silk thread. Silk became China’s most valuable export. Trade route to the Middle East became known as Silk Road. Europeans prized the porcelain and spices of China also!
The Silk Road

The Silk Road was a network of trade routes that connected the East and West, primarily through China to the Mediterranean. It facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultures between different civilizations. The main commodities traded included silk, spices, jade, and grains. The route consisted of three major sections: the路上的 through Central Asia, the 路上的 through South Asia, and the 路上的 through the Middle East. The Silk Road played a pivotal role in the economic and cultural development of the regions it connected.
Shang Art
Downfall of the Shang Dynasty

Slave revolt in 1122 B.C. led to downfall of Shang dynasty.

Shang kings eventually overtaken by the Wu, whose Zhou dynasty ruled China for 800 years.
Zhou Dynasty Map

Zhou Dynasty at its greatest extent

black lines represent Great Walls built by the Zhou
Zhou Dynasty
(1027 B.C.–256 B.C.)

- Great advances in technology and their economy and commerce grew.
- Developed trade routes
- Population increased.
- First official coins in China; unique shape, meaning?
The First Books... Zhou Dynasty

The State Chronicles of Lu Kingdom

It is recorded that Shanxi had an earthquake in 799 B.C.

Volume 1 of the Chronicles: In the 3rd year of King You (799 B.C.) of Zhou Dynasty, earthquakes happened in the plateaus. Some one said that it was the symbol that Zhou Dynasty would die out.

Earthquakes before Qin Dynasty
Qufu of Shandong province, had an earthquake in 618 B.C.
Qufu of Shandong province, had an earthquake in 557 B.C.
Qufu of Shandong province, had an earthquake in 523 B.C.

Made the first books from wood or bamboo.
Zhou Dynasty

- Remembered for technological advances:
  - the crossbow, the cavalry, iron plows, and irrigation and flood systems.
- Iron becomes very important to their culture.

Feudal Life During the Zhou Dynasty
Zhou Dynasty

- Established a feudal state; 260 years helps bring on Confucianism.
- The belief in the “Mandate of Heaven” became an established practice during this dynasty.

Feudal Life During the Zhou Dynasty
Mandate of Heaven

1. Chinese believed rulers governed according to “Mandate of Heaven”
2. Allowed rulers to remain in power as long as they were just and effective
3. Religion influencing the government HOW?
**The Dynastic Cycle in China**

The dynastic cycle refers to the rise and fall of dynasties.

**The New Dynasty**
- Restores peace
- Appoints loyal officials
- Redistributes land to peasants
- Builds canals, irrigation systems, and roads
- Repairs defensive walls

**The Aging Dynasty**
- Neglects government duties
- Ignores corrupt officials
- Loses control of the provinces
- Imposes heavy taxes to pay for luxuries
- Allows defensive walls to decay

**Problems**
- Floods, famine, earthquakes
- Invasions
- Armed bandits in the provinces
- Peasant revolts

**New dynasty claims the Mandate of Heaven**

**Aging dynasty loses the Mandate of Heaven**
Is there something missing from that list?
Qin Dynasty

- Shi Huangdi wiped out the Zhou and conquered northern China uniting under central government.
- Defeats all the feudal lords and creates an empire!
The First Emperor, Qin Shihuangdi, standardized society: weights and measures, coins, writing, and law.
Public Works Projects

Dominated the Qin Dynasty

Many public works projects were also undertaken:

1. A Great Wall was built in the north, to protect against invasions.
2. Roads and irrigation canals were built throughout the country.
3. Developed farmlands the size of the state of Connecticut enough to feed the people and a large army.
Strict Social Classes unless...

The lower class males could raise their status by the number of heads they cut off for the emperor!
Though his methods were brutal, Shi Huangdi ushered in China’s classical age.

This period is called a classical civilization because it set patterns in government, philosophy, religion, science, and the arts that served as the framework for later cultures.
**How Did Shi Huangdi Unite China?**

1. He replaced feudal states with military districts governed by loyal officials.
2. He sent spies to report on local officials.
3. He forced noble families to live in his capital so he could monitor them.
4. He jailed, tortured, and killed those who opposed his rule.
5. He had all books of philosophy and literature burned.
6. He standardized weights & measures.
7. He connected the various parts of the Great Wall and expanded it.
The Tomb of Shi Huangdi

- Ascending to the throne of his clan, the Qin, at the age of 13 in 246 BCE
- Shi Huangdi immediately began construction of his extraordinary mausoleum which was completed soon after his death in 210 BCE,
- 36 years after the work commenced
The Tomb of Shi Huangdi

• Located approximately 30 km outside of the present-day capital, X'ian (called Chang'an in ancient times)

• The tomb of Qin Shi Huangdi remains a symbol of the infinite power and ego of China's first Emperor.
The emperor’s army emerges

Key units of a disciplined force line Pit 2. Kneeling archers (blue) and standing archers (yellow) rained arrows on the foe. Cavalry with saddled horses (pink) and charioteers with infantry (green) could slash at the enemy’s weakest point. A reserve force of chariots (orange) is poised for action.

In Pit 1 thousands of infantrymen are assembled in ranks. Pit 3 holds 68 soldiers, perhaps in a command post; a fourth pit is empty. Its completion perhaps thwarted by a rebel uprising.
Shi Huangdi Army Going to the Afterlife with Him!
Terra Cotta Soldiers
Details

Archer from the tomb of Shi Huangdi

Arch of Shi Huangdi
Cavalryman, Tomb of Shi Huangdi

Watch a video segment from: 

Treasure! Tomb of the Terra Cotta Warriors
Early Chinese Life
1. http://www.central.k12.ca.us/akers/dynasty.html
10. http://complit.la.psu.edu/chinese/studWork/The%20Great%20Wall%20of%20China.ppt
11. http://international.tamu.edu/ipa/english/quake/relic/rlc03.html
**Shang Dynasty**

- Ancestor worship
- Ancestors were as important as gods who controlled every part of life
- Oracle bones were used to consult with ancestors and predict the future
- Belief in an afterlife in which ancestors are reunited

**Zhou Dynasty**

- Invention of Chinese characters unified language throughout China
- Good kings earned heaven's support, or "Mandate of Heaven"
- Bad kings could be overthrown
- Feudalism prevailed which meant nobles owned the farmland and serfs and peasants did the work
- Worshipped Tian, or heaven, which demanded correct behavior and good government

- Had walled cities
- Powerful leaders
- Rulers were related to one family
- Shang and Zhou peasants and soldiers guarded their borders