

About the Show

Sam gets trapped inside *The Book*, and Anna, Fred, and Joe travel back to the Tang dynasty in China in 621 c.e. to figure out how to get him out. En route they help the Shaolin Monks rescue General Li Shimin from prison, travel past the beginnings of the Great Wall, learn about the teachings of Zen Buddhism, and come face to face with the evil Mad Jack!

Introduction

Ancient China is a fascinating topic that students may not be familiar with. In addition to an introduction to the history and culture of China, students may also be intrigued to learn about the development of kung fu and other martial arts.

Historical Background

Tang China was one of the greatest empires of the ancient world. After a period of chaos and division following the collapse of the Han dynasty in 220 c.e. and reunification under the Sui dynasty, Li Yuan (Gaozu) established the Tang dynasty. His son, Li Shimin (Taozong), was a brilliant general who came to power in 627 c.e. During his 26-year reign, trade, the arts, science and technology, and religion all enjoyed a “golden age” as the empire expanded and prospered.

The capital, Ch’ang-an, where grand palaces and temples were built, was the largest city in the world at the time. Earlier advances in China had included paper, silk, the wheelbarrow, the crossbow, and the magnetic compass. New scientific and technological knowledge developed. In medicine, Sun Simiao (a famous Daoist priest and medical expert during the Tang dynasty) documented his extensive medical knowledge, including treatment with herbs, drugs,

Curriculum Connections

- ancient China
- martial arts
- meditation
- monks
- Tang dynasty
- Zen Buddhism

Subject Areas

- art
- language arts
- social studies



Wushu Were Here



Historical Background *continued*

and acupuncture. Literature, poetry, calligraphy, and painting flourished. The Tang Code, compiled in 624 c.e., advanced the legal system by establishing standards for conviction and punishment of crimes.

Buddhism, based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, had been introduced to China from India during the Han dynasty, but it flourished during Taozong's reign. Bodhidharma, a monk supposedly descended from Siddhartha, came to the Shaolin Temple, a famous monastery of the region. According to legend, he was initially refused entry, so he sat in a cave nearby and meditated for nine years. When he was finally allowed in, Bodhidharma found the monks out of shape from a lifetime spent in study. He taught the monks a regimen of exercises and breathing, that evolved into a martial arts style known as kung fu—a means to promote health as well as a mental and physical discipline.

The teachings of Bodhidharma became known as Chan Buddhism, more familiarly recognized by its Japanese name, Zen Buddhism. (*Wushu*, as Anna explains in "Wushu Were Here," means the study of the art of fighting. It is the correct term for the more commonly known *kung fu*, which roughly translates to "skill" and refers specifically to the energy, feeling, and effort expended in doing or making something.)

By the early 7th century, a warrior-monk culture had grown up around Shaolin. In 621 c.e., according to legend, a group of 13 Shaolin monks saved the life of Li Shimin and helped him to defeat the enemy. This rescue allegedly caused the emergence of the Shaolin warrior-monks as a significant force in Chinese politics.

Want students to get even more excited about history?



Check out the **China** adventure for kids at

www.timewarptrio.com/adventures/china/

Put It Back, Jack! and other interactive games to play.

Plentifax 487—the ultimate time traveler's guide—gives facts about ancient China, and more!

Cool Books that kids will love.

Activity 1



ABC Chart

In “Wushu Were Here,” Sam, Fred, Joe, and Anna learn about China’s martial arts, Shaolin monks, and the Tang dynasty as they try to recover *The Book*. Have students explore these and other aspects of ancient China by creating an ABC chart.

Instructions

1. Explain that students are going to use their research to create an “ABC Chart” about 7th century China. They will record their findings in each alphabet square.
2. In a large group, brainstorm a list of topics about 7th century China that begin with each of the letters in the alphabet. Use the following topics to get started: Bodhidharma, Zen Buddhism, Confucius, the Great Wall of China, Kung Fu.
3. Divide students into small groups or pairs and assign a letter and corresponding topic to each group. (The letters XYZ can all be in the same square). Some letters may have more than one topic (e.g., China, Confucius). Some groups may need to fill in more than one square in order to complete the alphabet.
4. Distribute the “It’s As Easy as A-B-C” handout. Review the instructions with the students.
5. Ask students to fill in their squares with three facts about the idea, person, or item in that square. They will also need to draw a picture or other representation in the square.
6. Have students share their squares with the class. Discuss which letters were hardest to fill. What new vocabulary words did students discover?
7. Display all of the squares in alphabetical order on a bulletin board.

Objectives

- to expand students’ knowledge of ancient Chiuna
- to practice research skills

Materials

- paper, posterboard, or foam core cut into squares with enough room to write and draw in each block
- writing supplies
- “It’s as Easy as A-B-C” handout

Curriculum Standards

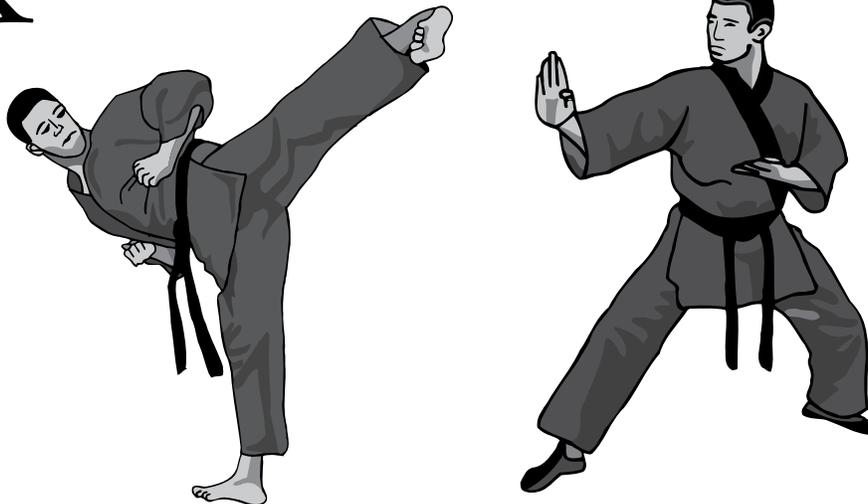
- **NCSS**
The students will explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns.
- **NCTE/IRA**
Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world and to acquire new information.

It's as Easy as A-B-C

Directions

- 🍇 **A**ctivate your mind. You will be exploring the world of ancient China.
- 🍇 **B**e thoughtful. What kind of information do you want to find?
- 🍇 **C**arefully plan the way you will display your information.
- 🍇 **D**ecide who will draw the illustration for your square.
- 🍇 **E**ach square needs to be labeled with a single letter of the alphabet in the upper left hand corner.
- 🍇 **F**ind as much information as you can, online or at the library.
- 🍇 **G**ather notes as you go.
- 🍇 **H**ave fun!

K



Kung fu is a martial arts style. It evolved from a regimen of exercise and breathing taught to the Shaolin monks by Bodhidharma, a descendant of the father of Buddhism.

Activity 2

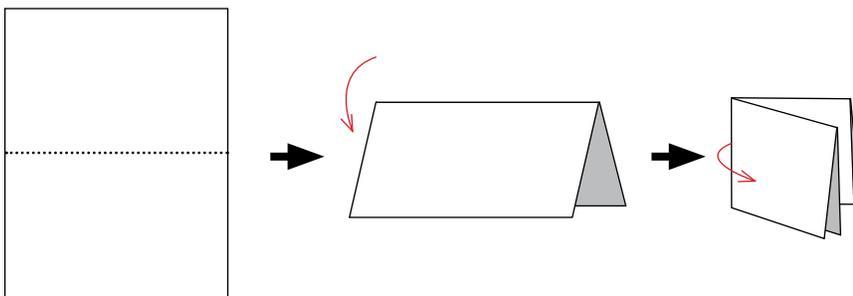


Story Screen

This activity can be used in several ways. It can focus on sequencing, in which students identify and tell the four most important parts of a story. It can also focus on retelling, in which students identify the main character, the setting, the plot, and the resolution. The Story Screen can also be used as an organizer for research—in this case, for retelling information about famous Chinese leaders or Chinese science and technology.

Instructions

1. Have students, individually or in groups, choose one of the following assignments:
 - Research a famous ancient Chinese leader and identify four facts associated with him or her.
 - Read a novel about China and identify the main character, setting, plot, and resolution.
 - Identify four Chinese artifacts and explain their significance. (Explain that artifacts include but are not limited to pottery, china, jewelry, clothing, weapons, tools, and statues.)
 - Choose four examples of ancient Chinese science and technology and explain their significance.
2. Distribute the paper or posterboard to each student or group.
3. Have students fold the paper in half. Then have them fold that half in half vertically.



Objectives

- to improve reading comprehension and analysis
- to practice research skills

Materials

- 12" x 18" white construction paper or poster board
- writing supplies

Curriculum Standards

- **NCSS**
Science, Technology & Society: Students will examine and describe the influence of culture on scientific and technological choices and advancement, such as in transportation, medicine, and warfare.
- **NCTE/IRA**
Students conduct research on interests and issues by generating ideas and questions and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

Activity 2



4. When students open their paper it will form a four-segment fan. This is the Story Screen.
5. Have the students write and draw the facts, myths, expressions, or story elements on their Story Screen, putting one in each of the four sections.
6. To make their Story Screens more attractive, have students
 - Draw borders between the four segments, color or decorate it as much as they can.
 - Outline everything in a darker color or with a fine-tip black felt pen.
7. When the Story Screens are finished, have students share them with the class. Ask students to describe the process they went through in selecting what to put on each of the four segments.



Recommended Books

For Teachers

Art of Shaolin Kung Fu

by Wong Kiew Kit. (Tuttle, 2002)
A comprehensive introduction to kung fu and other Shaolin practices.

Cambridge Illustrated History of China by Patricia Buckley Ebrey. (Cambridge University Press, 1999)
A comprehensive overview of Chinese history and culture. See also *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook, second edition* (Free Press, 1993) by the same author.

A Concise History of China

by J.A.G. Roberts. (Harvard University Press, 1999)
A chronicle of people and events in Chinese history.

The Open Empire: A History of China to 1600, 6th rev. ed.

by Valerie Hensen. (Norton, 2000)
This book examines the evolution of Chinese civilization and the lives of ordinary people.

For Students

Fiction

Adventures in Ancient China by Linda Bailey. (Kids Can Press, 2003)
Josh, Emma, and Libby time travel to ancient China by using a book—just like the *Time Warp Trio*.

Beautiful Warrior, The Legend of the Nun's Kung Fu by Emily Arnold McCully. (Scholastic, 1998)

Although she is a girl, Jingyong is educated and learns kung fu at her father's insistence. She uses her skills to help a young woman, Mingyi, avoid a forced marriage to a bully.

The Butterfly's Dream retold by Ippo Keido. (Tuttle Publishing, 2003)
These are seven stories from the *Chuang-Tzu* (a collection of stories written sometime during the Chou Dynasty) about thinking and acting independently.

The Chi'i-lin Purse: A Collection of Ancient Chinese Stories by Linda Fang. (Farrar, 1997)
A collection of ten stories that can be read aloud.

The Dragon Prince: A Chinese Beauty and the Beast Tale by Laurence Yep. (HarperCollins, 1998)
In a tale based on Chinese mythologies, Seven marries a dragon to save her father's life.

The Greatest Power by Demi. (Simon & Schuster, 2004)
Emperor Ping challenges the children in his country to find the greatest power in the world. See also *The Empty Pot* by the same author.

Homesick, My Own Story by Jean Fritz. (Putnam, 1982)
This is the fictionalized story of the childhood of Jean Fritz, well-known children's book writer, growing up in 20th century China.

The Kite Rider by Geraldine McCaughrean. (HarperCollins, 2003)
A 12-year-old boy becomes a skilled kite rider to avenge the death of his father in the court of Kublai Khan.

Lady of Ch'iao Kuo, Warrior of the South by Laurence Yep. (Scholastic, 2001)

The Royal Diaries series. Set in southern China in 531, this is the fictional diary of Princess Redbird, who grew up to be a great ruler.

Lily Dragon by Mary Ellis. (HarperCollins, 1999)
Lily and her younger brother Tom travel to China to meet relatives and experience Chinese culture firsthand.

Lord of the Cranes by Kerstin Chen. (North-South, 2000)
Tien, the lord of the cranes, comes to Earth to check on the kindness of mankind.

One Hand Clapping, Zen Stories for All Ages selected, adapted and retold by Rafe Martin and Manuela Soares. (Rizzoli, 1995)
Eighteen stories all reflect different aspects of Zen.

The Painted Wall and Other Strange Tales selected and adapted by Michael Bedard. (Tundra Books, 2003)
In the 17th century, a scholar named Pu Sung-ling collected over 500 folk and fairy tales from all over China. Here are 23 of his stories.

The Story of Noodles by Ying Chang Compestine. (Holiday House, 2002)
The mischievous Kang boys accidentally create noodles when they shred their mother's dumpling dough. For younger readers.

Zen Shorts by Jon J. Muth. (Scholastic, 2005)
Stillwater, a magical panda bear, describes the Zen approach to life.

Nonfiction

Ancient China by Dale Anderson. (Raintree, 2005)
History in Art series. Using sculpture, paintings, and other artifacts, this book explores major dynasties as well as daily life in those eras.

Ancient China by Brian Williams. (Viking, 1996)
See Through History series. Full-color illustrations plus overlays introduce students to ancient China.

The Ancient Chinese by Virginia Schomp. (Watts, 2005)
People of the Ancient World series. A guide to warriors, peasants, artists, merchants, and others in ancient Chinese society.

Ancient Medicine: From Sorcery to Surgery by Michael Woods. (Runestone, 1999)
A look at the medical practices and innovations in ancient Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Greek, and Roman cultures and how they have influenced medicine today.

The Asian Empires by Rebecca Steffof. (Benchmark Books, 2005)
World Historical Atlases series. An overview of Imperial China, the rulers of India, and Ottoman Turkey, with maps and pictures.

Buddhism by Anita Ganeri. (Peter Bedrick Books, 2001)
This introduction to Buddhism includes information about the Buddha's life and teachings, monks, gods and goddesses, festivals, and the differences in observance of the religion from country to country.

The Emperor's Silent Army by Jane O'Connor. (Viking, 2002)
More than 7,500 ancient statues of soldiers and horses were discovered buried in northern China. The story of their excavation is told with words and pictures.

Empress of China Wu Ze Tian by Cheng An Jiang. (Victory Press, 1998)
Wu Ze Tian, China's only female emperor, stabilized the government, produced more food, and allowed the silk industry to prosper.

The Great Wall of China by Lesley A. DuTemple. (Lerner, 2003)
The need for, construction of, and the role of the Great Wall in China's history and development are placed in context with pictures and text.

Imperial China by Hazel Mary Martel. (Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1999)
How did the Chinese people live under their emperors? Society, everyday life, and the arts all changed after the invasion led by Kublai Khan, the first Mongol ruler of China.

Made in China by Deborah Nash. (Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2004)
A simple introduction to products, symbols, food, and geographical features of China are told in a story about a paper butterfly. For younger readers.

Science in Ancient China by George Beshore. (Watts, 1998)
Science of the Past series. Examines the achievements of the ancient Chinese in medicine, astronomy, and science, as well as innovations such as rockets, the compass, and moveable type.

Treasures From China by David and Patricia Armentrout. (Rourke Book Company, Inc., 2001)
Cliff carvings, kilns, tombs, and ancient buildings all help archeologists learn how people in China lived long ago. For younger readers.

You Are in Ancient China by Ivan Minnis. (Raintree, 2005)
Through color photographs and a you-are-there writing style, this book introduces the history of China as well as life there today.

Your Travel Guide to Ancient China by Josepha Sherman. (Lerner, 2004)
A guidebook about ancient China includes where ink comes from, how to get around, how money works, and lots of other useful facts.

Poetry

Tai Chi Morning, Snapshots of China by Nikki Grimes. (Cricket Books, 2004)
Nineteen poems capture the experiences of traveling in China in 1998. With illustrations by Ed Young.

Web Sites

ANCIENT CHINA

www.historylink101.com/china_history.htm

Explore the art, daily life, and maps of ancient China. The site includes images of the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, and other famous places.

ANCIENT CHINA

www.historyforkids.org/learn/china/

History for Kids offers information about ancient Chinese history (with timelines) environment (with maps), project ideas, teacher guides, and more.

ANCIENT CHINESE TECHNOLOGY

library.thinkquest.org/23062/

Explore how technology pioneered by the Chinese is used in agriculture, engineering, mathematics, transportation, physics, and more.

CHINA

www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/prehistory/china/

Created by Minnesota State University, this comprehensive site offers timelines, maps, and information about ancient China as well as Imperial China.

Please note:

Although these sites were verified at the time of publication, Web site addresses and content are frequently subject to change.

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