Geography Skills

Score 1 point for each correct answer. Use the map on the previous page to check shading and labeling.

1. The Sea of Japan (East Sea) lies farthest north.
2. Students should label the Taklimakan Desert and the Gobi Desert.
3. Traders would have had to cross the Gobi Desert, the Taklimakan Desert, and part of the Tian Shan mountains.
4. Check students’ map for sea route to India. The compass allowed the Chinese to travel even when the sun and the stars were not visible. Thus, they could reach their destinations more quickly and accurately.
5. The northern border of China is not mountainous, as are its western and southwestern borders. Its eastern border is protected by the sea. China was open to attack from the north, which is why the Great Wall of China extends along this border.
6. Students should label the Huang He and the Chang Jiang rivers, the North China Plain, and the Chang Jiang Basins. The land near the Huang He and Chang Jiang was heavily populated because it was a flat, fertile region. The rivers provided water and a readily available transportation route.
7. Students should label the Plateau of Tibet, the Tian Shan, and the Himalayas. China’s highlands are located in the western part of the country. These mountains would have to have been crossed by overland traders. This would have proven difficult because they are so high and the climate is very cold. Trade by way of the sea would have avoided these mountains.

Critical Thinking

Questions may have more than one correct answer. Score 1 to 3 points for each reasonable answer, depending on the strength of students’ geographic reasoning. Possible answers are given here.

8. India is much closer to China than is Europe. In addition, it was easier for people and ideas to travel between India and China than between Europe and China. Although overland travel to India would have required passage through the Himalayas, the sea route was much safer. Sea travel to Europe was nearly impossible, since it required sailing around Africa. Overland travel was also extremely difficult, since the route was long and required crossing mountains and deserts.
9. The land to the north of the North China Plain is desert. People who lived in this region may have attacked the Chinese to obtain food from their farms or to gain control of the river.
10. Harsh physical features confined the expansion of China to the lowlands along the coast and to the plateau of central China. The mountains and deserts of surrounding areas prohibited expansion.
11. The flat, fertile land near the Huang He (Yellow River) and Chang Jiang (Yangtze River) allowed people to produce plenty of food. This meant they sometimes had extra food and had the free time to produce other goods. The rivers made transporting these goods possible, which caused trade to flourish. The growth in trade caused certain areas near the rivers to attract more and more people, which led to the growth of cities.
Using Scores to Inform Instruction

**Geography Skills** A score of 4 out of 7 or better indicates that students have acquired sufficient geographic information to proceed with the unit.

**Critical Thinking** A score of 8 out of 16 or better indicates that students are beginning to understand the relationships between physical geography and the different ways in which people live.

Modifying Instruction

**ELL or Learners with Special Education Needs**
Consider focusing on map-reading questions or limiting the number of “Critical Thinking” questions.

**Students with Weak Map or Critical Thinking Skills**
Assign appropriate pages from the Social Studies Skills Toolkit in the back of the Lesson Masters.