**Grade 6 Ohio Standards**

**Theme:** Regions and People of the Eastern Hemisphere

**Topic: Early Civilization. History Strand.**

**Content Statement: 1.** Events can be arranged in order of occurrence using the conventions of B.C. and A.D. or B.C.E. and C.E  
 **Content Statement: 2.** Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Topic: Human Systems. Geography Strand**

**Content Statements: 3**. Globes and other geographic tools can be used to gather, process and report information about people, places and environments. Cartographers decide which information to include and how it is displayed.

**Content Statement: 5.** Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, or economic).  
  
**Content Statement: 6.** Variations among physical environments within the Eastern Hemisphere influence human activities. Human activities also alter the physical environment.  
  
**Content Statement: 7.** Political, environmental, social and economic factors cause people, products and ideas to move from place to place in the Eastern Hemisphere in the past and today.   
  
**Content Statement: 8.** Modern cultural practices and products show the influence of tradition and diffusion, including the impact of major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism).

**Common Core Literacy in Social Studies**  
**6-8th Grades**

7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts).

8. Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

10. By the end of grade eight, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity both independently and proficiently.

**Introduction:**

China, located in Asia, has the oldest surviving civilization in the world, which can be traced back to 5,000 B.C. Recent archaeology has uncovered humans in China as far back as 10,000 B.C. who were developing agriculture in the fertile lands. The ancient civilizations of China were located in Central China by two rivers, the Yellow (Huang He) River and the Yangtze or Changjiiang River. The early China civilizations were very isolated from the rest of the world. However, in the 1700s B.C. the invaders called the Shang, came to the Huang He river valley and built a permanent, organized settlement and began ruling as a dynasty, taking over from the one ruler form of government. From that time on, China was ruled by different dynasties that each contributed to China’s growth.

During the early dynasties, the Chinese were ruled by a king. They believed in the divinity of the king and consequently he was the religious and political head of the society. The dynasties controlled the military for the country.

Early China was isolated from the rest of the world, and the building of the Great Wall of China to keep out intruders, exhibits this wanted separation. Much of their culture reflected this isolation, including the creation of the Forbidden City that restricted ordinary people from entering. Even though the Silk Road ran through the northern part of China, connecting it to other parts of the world, most of the citizens remained isolated due to the control of the dynasties. There were three main teachings that emerged in China, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, that influenced the different dynasties.

Even with the isolation, the Chinese have contributed much to the development of the world. They have four main inventions credited to them. These are the compass, gunpowder, paper and printmaking. The Chinese have the earliest printed book from 868 A.D. The Chinese also invented the making of silk which proved to be a profitable export for them.

Chinese mythology and art are present around the world, and some folklore has been adapted by other countries, such as the dragon. The importance of tea and the accompanying ceremonies has traveled to other countries. Even though isolated for years, the ancient Chinese settlements have ended up having great influence around the world.

**Artifacts: Ceramic Dragon   
 Dragon Vase**

The dragon is an important symbol for China, from ancient times to today. China is considered the birthplace of dragon culture. There have been relics found from the Neolithic Age unearthed in the Yellow River, Yangtze River and Liache River Basins. The dragon was one of the totem worship images used to symbolize strength and power in some of the ancient tribes of China. The dragon was also known as a symbol of rain and water and was believed to be the ruler of moving bodies of water, including rivers. The dragon was seen as a power to be worshiped and temples were built to the dragons. Local government and gentry led the communities in offering sacrifice and conducting religious rites to keep the dragons happy. There are different dragons to represent different regions of China.

The culture of dragons has spread around the world from China, but dragons have developed different interpretations and meanings in other countries.

**Geographical Themes:** Region and Movement

**Activity**: The students can investigate one of the nine dragons from the Children of the Dragon myth. They will then draw a picture, or print it from the internet of a place where the specific dragon is used in Chinese architecture. They will include a written explanation of the dragon, and where the dragon is portrayed most often. As a tie-in to ELA some dragon myths can be read by the students.

**Artifact: Giant Panda stuffed  
 Giant Panda Illustration**

The Giant Panda is used as the emblem of China, and were once found across central, southern and eastern areas of China. The giant pandas like low stress and solitary lives.

The Giant Panda is now an endangered species in the world. Currently giant pandas live in large bamboo forests on humid and mountain slopes in China. This is the only place they live naturally in the world. The main reason that the giant pandas have become endangered is due to the destruction by humans of their natural habitats. Starting in ancient China, bamboo forests were removed and the land changed to foster agriculture use. Many of the remaining bamboo forests have been destroyed as the bamboo has been logged.

**Geographical Theme:** Human Environment Interaction

**Activity:** The students, working in pairs, will research one of the endangered or extinct animals from China. They will use a prepared graphic organizer to answer specific questions. The student will suggest ways that this animal could be saved by human interaction in the wild now, or could have been saved before, such as not removing anymore bamboo forests. The students can present their information on a poster that will be displayed. The students will create a time-line showing the progress of the animal’s status towards extinction or endangered.

**Artifact: Bamboo Stalks  
 Bamboo Plant  
 Bamboo Drawing  
 Bamboo Curtains**

Bamboo is technically a grass, but it is harvested for its strong shoots. Bamboo is traced back to prehistoric grasses from thirty to forty million years ago. Bamboo is thought to have originated in China, but is now grown all over the world except in very cold climates, such as Antarctica.

Bamboo was used in the daily lives of ancient Chinese. In fact, China is the first place to have records of using bamboo to create everyday items. It was used as firewood, and to make tiles, paper, rafts, hats, rain capes, and shoes. The bamboo shoots are edible and contain vitamins, sugar, fat and protein. The Chinese used bamboo in Chinese medicine. They used bamboo for building. In addition, bamboo is the major food source for Giant Pandas, encompassing 90% of their diets.

Today, Bamboo is considered a valuable resource because it is easy to grow, is quickly renewable, and is strong enough to use for building. The Chinese still use bamboo to make many household articles along with traditional Chinese instruments such as the sheng, the di and the xiao. In addition, products made of bamboo are found all over the world. Bamboo is used for household articles, such as beds, pillows, benches. Bamboo can be woven and is used for crafts, arts, tea boxes and curtains. It is considered a green resource.

**Geographical Themes**: Human Environment Interaction, Place and Movement

**Activity:** How has one resource, bamboo from Ancient China, influenced the modern world?

Students work in groups. They choose to research bamboo uses in Ancient China or bamboo uses in modern times. The students working in groups will find at least 3 examples of bamboo uses for their period. The students will create models of the bamboo products to share with the class. They will be encouraged to explore three different areas of use, such as for building, household good, landscaping, medicine or as food. They will write a description of each item that they model including details and the use of the item. They will read their description when they present their bamboo items.

**Artifact: Chinese Tea  
 Dragon Tea Set: cup, saucer, pitcher and tea pot**

Tea, which originated in China, was an export of China in ancient times, and remains one today. One of the main areas for producing tea is the Yangtze or Changjiiang River. Their main tea product is green tea, with some black tea produced.

Tea has been, and continues to be, an important part of Chinese culture. Tea has played a social role in China for centuries. In the past, the people of lower rank poured the tea for the higher rank, such as children would pour tea for their parents. There are specific tea ceremonies in China throughout the centuries.

**Geographical Theme:** Region

**Activity:** The students, working in small diverse groups, will research a tea ceremony that originated in China. The students will write out a script to role play the ceremony. The class will have a tea ceremony day. The students will enact the script for the class for the ceremony they researched, using props and simple costumes to represent the characters. Black, green, oolong or appropriate tea for the ceremony will be served to the students. As an art tie-in, students can research and design a Chinese symbol to draw on a Styrofoam cup that they can drink their tea from.

**Artifact: Compass**

The compass is known as one of the four Great Inventions of the Chinese. The Chinese discovered the magnetic compass using their natural resources. While mining for ores and the process of smelting copper and iron, they discovered that the natural mineral, magnetite, which attracted iron, always pointed to the north if suspended.

**Activity:** The students will be put into groups and given a compass and a set of directions to follow that reference the compass. They will be filling out a sheet of the locations that they come upon as they follow the directions.

**Geographical Theme**: Location

**Artifacts: Silk Road Maps  
 Silk Painting of Bird on Branch  
 Chinese Brush Painting by Kuei Dorman (on silk)**

The Silk Road was an overland route that connected China to Central Asia, and Central Asia to the Eastern Mediterranean. In China, the route ran in the Northern provinces. The land routes were also accessed by using the rivers to transport goods to the roads. Three things developed for the countries using the Silk Road. They were economic impact, the spread of ideas and the spread of disease.

In China the economic impact was in the items that were traded. The main export of China was silk. Silk was spun from the cocoons of silkworms which were mulberry tree eating worms in China. The Chinese held their secret of spinning silk for hundreds of years. The secret was stolen in the 6th century AD. In addition. Silk became highly desired by the Romans. The silk trade brought lots of gold to China. China‘s exported raw materials were jade, silver and iron. The Chinese also exported teas, salt, sugar, porcelain, and spices. Some of the imports to China were cotton, ivory, wool, gold and silver.

Many different ideas spread throughout the countries. One of the biggest ideas to spread into China was the religion of Buddhism. It was brought to China from India and then refined.

Diseases spread with the traders on the Silk Road. Many of the actual traders developed immunity, but they carried the germs. One of the biggest diseases to spread from China was the Bubonic Plague, or the Black Death.

**Geographical Themes:** Location, Movement

**Activity:** The students will examine the different printed maps of the Silk Road. They will discuss the difference in the details provided and why the cartographers may have chosen them. The students can use interactive maps to see the different features, including latitude and longitude maps.

The students will research an item exported from China on the Silk Road. They will write an essay on how the product was used and how the product is used today.

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