

Table of Contents

UNIT SYNOPSIS.....	2
CONTENT STANDARDS.....	3
INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES.....	4
ROADMAP.....	6
VERTICAL STANDARDS.....	38
VOCABULARY GLOSSARY.....	38

UNIT SYNOPSIS



Confucius, taken from Wikipedia

Why study Imperial China? With 1.4 billion inhabitants living across close to 10 million square kilometers, present-day China is one of the biggest and most influential countries in the world. But thousands of years ago, China hardly resembled the nation we see today. Indeed, ancient “China” was not a unified nation at all. Instead, many dynasties ruled various regions throughout China, divided by vast mountains, deserts, and rivers. In 221 B.C.E., the Qin Dynasty united China under its rule, led by Emperor Qin Shi Huang. For more than a thousand years, China would remain united under dynastic rule, from the Han Dynasty to the Ming Dynasty. Throughout this imperial history, the Chinese followed Confucian and Taoist philosophies while practicing Buddhist religion. During this time, some Chinese worked as highly respected civil servants for the government, while most were peasants in rural communities. The Chinese traded goods and ideas with the rest of the world along the famed Silk Road and built marvels that still stand today, like the Great Wall of China. Imperial China’s many innovations and achievements, from gunpowder to the compass, helped China become the powerful nation it is today while influencing people around the world through the present day.

The National Standards for History call for elementary students to understand “the cultures and historical developments of selected societies” and these societies’ innovations and contributions to the global story of humanity. In this unit, you will introduce your students to the rich and complex culture of imperial China and the lasting significance of its many innovations on our world today. The study of China outlined in this unit will ensure your students understand an essential cultural influence on world history that is foundational to the study of future civilizations. In doing so, students will leave this unit prepared to study how Chinese culture and innovations influenced the development of other civilizations in the emerging medieval period. You will introduce and reinforce key ideas about imperial China through rich, whole class Shared Content Reading™ and Close Reading text selections. Students will also convey their knowledge of China through project work—including creating replicas of Emperor Qin Shi Huang’s terracotta soldiers!

CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards **taught** and **assessed** in this unit.

Readiness Standards	Supporting Standards
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History

3.1 The student understands how individuals, events, and ideas have influenced the history of various communities.

(A) describe how individuals, events, and ideas have changed communities, past and present.

3.2

The student understands common characteristics of communities, past and present.

(A) identify reasons people have formed communities, including a need for security and laws, religious freedom, and material well-being
(B) compare ways in which people in the local community and other communities meet their needs for government, education, communication, transportation, and recreation.

Geography

3.3

The student understands how humans adapt to and/or modify the physical environment.

(B) identify and compare how people in different communities adapt to or modify the physical environment in which they live such as deserts, mountains, wetlands, and plains.
(C) describe the effects of human processes such as building new homes, conservation, and pollution in shaping the landscape.

3.4

The student understands the concepts of location, distance, and

Geography

3.4(B) use a scale to determine the distance between places on maps and globes.

Culture

3.10(A)

explain the significance of various ethnic and/or cultural celebrations in the local community and other communities

3.10(B)

compare ethnic and/or cultural celebrations in the local community with other communities

Social Studies Processing Skills

3.14 The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology.

(B) interpret oral, visual, and print material by sequencing, categorizing, identifying the main idea, distinguishing between fact and opinion, identifying cause and effect, comparing, and contrasting.

3.15 The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.

(D) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences.
(E) create written and visual material such as stories, pictures, maps, and graphic organizers to express ideas.

3.16 The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others.

(A) use problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages

<p>direction on maps and globes. (A) use cardinal and intermediate directions to locate places on maps and globes in relation to the local community (C) identify, create, and interpret maps of places that contain map elements, including a title, compass rose, legend, scale, and grid system.</p> <p><i>(To best align with the 3rd grade Social Studies Texas standards, teachers should approach the ancient civilization content with the intention of making connections and comparisons to our communities today and in the past. Alignment questions have been added to the discourse portion of each lesson.)</i></p>	<p>ges, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution</p>
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UCLA National Standards for History Addressed

Standard 7A:
The student understands the cultures and historical developments of selected societies in such places as Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe.

Standard 8A:
The student understands the development of technological innovations, the major scientists and inventors associated with them and their social and economic effects.

Standard 8C:
The student understands changes in communication and their effects.

VERTICAL STANDARDS

2 nd Grade Social Studies	3 rd Grade Social Studies	4 th Grade Social Studies
Students will engage in a course about diversity and culture in the local community and state.	Students will engage in a course about ancient world communities and how they were created and functioned.	Students will engage in a course about Texas history and how the communities have changed over the history of Texas.

