During the Han dynasty, China experienced a period of peace, stability, and prosperity. Han emperors established a strong military, which allowed them to conquer new territories, expanding the reach of the empire as far as modern-day Korea and North Vietnam. In addition, they extended their power through diplomatic alliances with neighboring peoples. These alliances were often forged through strategic marriages or the exchange of lavish presents. Under the Han, the Chinese also engaged in international trade. Trading such goods as silk, spices, and jade, the Chinese acquired new products and ideas - including Buddhism - from ancient cultures such as India, Central Asia, and Rome. Much of the trade occurred locally in small trade centers throughout Asia that became known collectively as the Silk Road.

According to the above document, how did the Han dynasty extend their relations with other countries/regions?

____________________

____________________

____________________

During the Han dynasty, great achievements were made in the areas of education, culture, and science. Shifting away from the Legalist philosophy of the Qin dynasty, Han rulers instituted a Confucian system of government under which government officials were selected based on merit, rather than by birth. Scholars who proved their knowledge of Confucian classics and literary talent were appointed officials, who enforced Han laws and collected taxes. This encouraged the development of Confucian education, which became more widespread among the general populace. In addition, the Han government promoted the development of the arts: paper was invented, painting and calligraphy flourished, and fine porcelain was created. The Han period also saw some remarkable advances in science and technology, such as the invention of water clocks, star maps, and compasses. Perhaps most importantly, Han rulers increased trade and communication by building new roads and waterways. While Han rulers struggled at times to maintain control over their large empire, Han society remained basically intact for over 400 years.

What were some achievements of the Han dynasty? _________________________________

____________________

____________________

____________________
Give one example of how Chinese technology improved their quality of life?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

In China under the Tang and Song Dynasties foot binding and civil service exams were seen as important practices. Foot binding gave women the opportunity to marry into a wealthy family; however, it made it difficult for those with bound feet to care for themselves. Civil Service exams were based on the teachings of Confucius. Boys would study from the age of 7 until they took the exam to attain a government position and bring wealth and prestige to their families.

How did the practice of foot binding affect the lives of women in China? ________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Describe the teachings emphasized on the civil service examination? ________________
______________________________________________________________________________
According to the map, which conclusion about China during the Tang and Song dynasties is accurate?

1. Most trade routes began in Beijing.
2. China's overland trade routes connected China to Japan.
3. The areas under the control of these dynasties did not change.
4. China traded extensively with other nations and regions.

Which civilization first developed a civil service system, invented gunpowder, and manufactured porcelain?

1. Aztec  
2. Chinese  
3. Japanese  
4. Roman

- Block printing, gunpowder, and the abacus were developed.
- Porcelain making and black-ink painting on silk paper were perfected.
- The compass was discovered and used to improve the determination of direction when sailing.

These advances are associated with the:

1. Tang and Sung dynasties of China
2. Gupta Empire in India
3. Ghana and Mali civilizations of Africa
4. Byzantine Empire in the Middle East
Han Emperors in China

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the spread of Indian religions and culture.
In this section, you will read about the Han Dynasty in China.

AS YOU READ

Use the web below to take notes on the Han Dynasty.

The Han Restore Unity to China

(pages 200–202)

What changes did Han leaders make?

A strong empire also arose in China. The Chinese had been united briefly under the Qin empire. But it fell apart in a period of civil war. In 202 B.C., Liu Bang named himself the first emperor of the Han Dynasty. The Han would rule parts of China for the next 400 years. They set many patterns for Chinese culture for centuries to come.

Liu Bang created a centralized government. Local officials reported to the emperor. The rule of the previous emperor had been very harsh. Liu Bang took a different approach. He lowered taxes. He gave lighter penalties for crimes. Life became easier for the Chinese people.

From 141 to 87 B.C., the emperor Wudi ruled Han China. He made his empire almost the size of modern China. He defeated nomads in the north. He moved troops and settlers to the west. He sent soldiers to the north into modern Korea and to the south to modern Vietnam.

1. What changes did Liu Bang make?
A Highly Structured Society; Han Technology, Commerce, and Culture (pages 202–205)

What advances took place?

Chinese society under the Han dynasty was very structured. The emperor was at the top. He had a large number of officials, who reached down to the smallest village. They filled civil service jobs. Those who wanted these jobs had to pass an exam. The exam tested them on their knowledge of the writings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius.

To support a large government, the emperor collected taxes. Farmers paid part of the crops they gathered. Merchants paid taxes on the goods they traded. Peasants also had to work one month a year on government projects, such as dams and roads.

Under Han rule, the Chinese created many new inventions. One was paper. Paper made books more available and increased learning.

The Chinese also improved farming by inventing a new two-bladed plow. This change was important because the number of Chinese people had grown greatly. As Han emperors told their people, farming was the most important work. At the same time, several industries became important. The government had a monopoly on, or took complete control of, the mining of salt and making of iron, coins, and alcohol. It also made silk, which was in great demand in other lands.

2. Why were changes in farming so important?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Great Empires: Han China and Rome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Han Dynasty—202 B.C. to A.D. 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empire replaced rival kingdoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Centralized, bureaucratic government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Built roads and defensive walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conquered many diverse peoples in regions bordering China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• At its height—area of 1,500,000 square miles and 60,000,000 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chinese became common written language throughout empire</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ongoing conflict with nomads</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Roman Empire—27 B.C. to A.D. 476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empire replaced republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Centralized, bureaucratic government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Built roads and defensive walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conquered many diverse peoples in regions of three continents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• At its height—area of 3,400,000 square miles and 55,000,000 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Latin did not replace other written languages in empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing conflict with nomads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Han Unifies Chinese Culture; The Fall of The Han and Their Return (pages 205–207)

Why did problems develop?

China now included many different peoples. The Han rulers encouraged assimilation—making sure that these people learned Chinese ways. They urged the Chinese to marry them.

One group that did not do well in Han China was women. According to Confucius, women were limited to meeting the needs of their husband and children. Some upper-class women, however, were able to become involved in other areas of life.

The Han empire began to have problems. Rich people got richer, while the poor were forced to pay heavy taxes. Members of the court were caught up in plots to gain power. Eventually, the peasants rebelled against their high taxes and poor lives.

A government official named Wang Mang took the throne. He tried to help the poor by taking land from the large landholders. But a terrible flood struck China and the peasants rebelled again. The Han Dynasty was restored when a member of the Han family was put on the throne. This was called the Later Han Dynasty.

For the next few decades, China enjoyed peace and wealth. But the same problems arose. The gap between rich and poor was too great. By A.D. 220, the Han Dynasty had fallen for good.

3. What caused the fall of the Han Dynasty?

Skillbuilder

1. Which empire at its height covered more land?

2. What did the two empires have in common?
After the civil war that followed the death of Qin Shihuangdi in 210 B.C., China was reunited under the rule of the Han dynasty. Poetry, literature, and philosophy flourished during the reign of Emperor Wudi (141–86 B.C.). The monumental *Shiji* (Historical Records) written by Sima Qian (145–80 B.C.) set the standard for later government-sponsored histories. Among many other things, it recorded information about the various peoples, invariably described as "barbarian," who lived on the empire's borders. Wudi also established Confucianism as the basis for correct official and individual conduct and for the educational curriculum. The reliance of the bureaucracy on members of a highly educated class grounded in Confucian writings and other classics defined China's statecraft for many centuries.