

Ancient China

Lesson 19 Geography and the Early Settlement of China

Lesson 20 The Shang Dynasty

Lesson 21 Three Chinese Philosophies

Lesson 22 The First Emperor of China

Lesson 23 The Han Dynasty

Lesson 24 The Silk Road

Ancient China Geography Challenge

Overview

In this activity, students read and interpret a specialty map to learn about the expansion of China under various dynasties. Working in pairs, students answer questions while labeling and coloring a map of China. Afterward, they discuss their conclusions as a class.

Objectives

Students will

- compare the areas controlled by various Chinese dynasties.
- identify the length of time it took China to expand to near its present-day boundaries.
- make hypotheses regarding the influence of geographic features on China's history.

Materials

- *History Alive! The Ancient World*
- Interactive Student Notebooks
- Geography Challenge Handout 4 (3 copies, cut apart)
- colored pencils or markers



Geography Challenge

1 Prepare materials. Before class, cut the cards from copies of *Geography Challenge Handout 4: Geography Challenge Cards*. (**Note:** You may want to laminate the cards for future use.)

2 Introduce the activity. Explain that in this activity, students will compare the areas of China that various dynasties controlled during the country's early history. This activity will give students a background for the unit, in which they will learn about the early rulers of China, Chinese accomplishments, and China's relationship with the rest of the world.

3 Place students in mixed-ability pairs. You may want to prepare a transparency to show students where they will sit and with whom they will work.

4 Give each pair one Geography Challenge card. Have pairs turn to the map on page 181 of *History Alive! The Ancient World* and to Geography Challenge 4 in their Interactive Student Notebooks. Review the directions with them.

5 Monitor students' work. Use Guide to Geography Challenge 4 to check their responses. Have pairs exchange cards until all pairs have completed most of the questions.

6 Lead a class discussion. Review the answers, and then ask, *What do you now know about China that you didn't know before? What information from this map do you think will be most important in our study of China? What questions about China did this activity raise? In other words, what questions were left unanswered by the map you studied?*

Ancient China Question 1

Label the Yellow Sea, the East China Sea, and the South China Sea.

In what two ways might these seas have influenced China’s history?

Ancient China Question 2

Draw the boundaries of the territories covered by the Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han dynasties. Use a different color for each dynasty. Add them to the map key.

Why do you think the areas controlled by various dynasties kept expanding?

Ancient China Question 3

Label the Huang He and the Chang Jiang.

Why do you think these geographic features were important in the early history of China?

Ancient China Question 4

Which dynasty controlled the smallest area of China?

Which dynasty controlled the largest area of China?

Ancient China Question 5

Approximately how many years were there between the time a Chinese dynasty controlled the smallest area and the time a Chinese dynasty controlled the largest area?

Why do you think the Han dynasty never expanded into the southwest or the far northeast?

Ancient China Question 6

Draw and label the Great Wall.

The Great Wall was 1,500 miles long, 25 feet high, and 15 to 30 feet wide. Why do you think it was built?

Ancient China Question 7

Under which dynasty did China control territories that are not part of modern China?

Turn to the map on page 385. What present-day country south of China, and what present-day country northeast of China, were controlled by this dynasty?

Ancient China Question 8

Why do you think the majority group in China today calls itself the “Han people”?

Where do you think minority groups that do not consider themselves Han people might live in China today?



GUIDE TO GEOGRAPHY CHALLENGE 4

To complete each Geography Challenge card, answer the questions in complete sentences. Label the map on the opposite page as directed.

Question 1 Possible answer: The seas may have provided protection from the east and allowed China to trade with other countries.

Question 2 The territory controlled by dynasties might have grown because population increased, causing people to move into areas that were less populated. Also, various rulers might have used force to add territories.

Question 3 The Huang He and the Chang Jiang were important because they would have provided water for farming.

Question 4 The Shang controlled the smallest area of China; the Han controlled the largest.

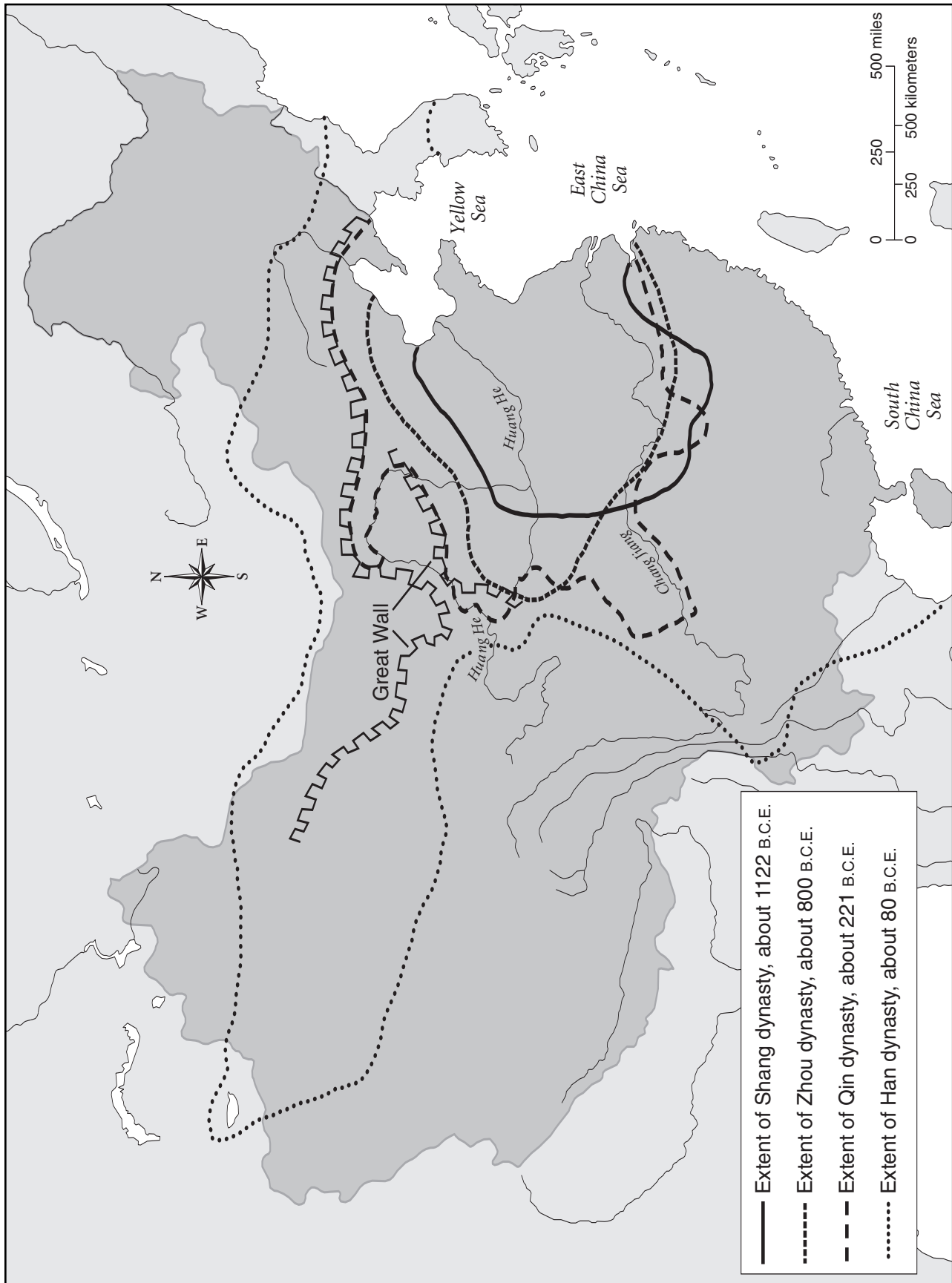
Question 5 Approximately 1,035 years; the areas might have been unsuitable for settlement because of geographic features such as mountains and deserts or extreme weather conditions. Also, the people may have been too strong to be conquered.

Question 6 The Great Wall might have been built as protection against the people who lived in the north or to prevent people from moving north.

Question 7 The Han controlled territories that are not part of modern China. Vietnam and Korea are the two present-day countries south and northeast of China that were controlled by this dynasty.

Question 8 The majority group may believe they are descendants of the people who controlled the largest area of ancient China. Minority groups might live in the southwest or northeast as these areas were not controlled by the Han dynasty.

GUIDE TO GEOGRAPHY CHALLENGE 4



Geography and the Early Settlement of China

Overview

In this lesson, students learn about the effect of geography on the early settlement of China. In a **Problem Solving Groupwork** activity, students read about and create a poster and a relief map of China's five important geographic regions. In their groups, they use their poster to support various hypotheses regarding the influence of regional geography on the settlement of China.

Objectives

Students will

- create a relief map of China.
- visually represent geographic features associated with Chinese geographic regions.
- support hypotheses regarding the influence of geography on the early settlement of China such as the extent to which geographic features served to isolate the country from the rest of the world.

Materials

- *History Alive! The Ancient World*
- Interactive Student Notebooks
- Transparency 19
- Student Handouts 19A–19C (1 each per group of 4)
- 9" x 12" card stock (4 sheets per group of 4)
- 12" x 18" card stock (2 sheets per group of 4) or 24" x 36" card stock (1 sheet per group of 4)
- 3 corrugated cardboard boxes
- scissors
- tape
- glue
- colored pencils or markers



Preview

Have students complete Preview 19 in their Interactive Student Notebooks. If necessary, help them to identify land features, climate, and vegetation in your community. Allow students time to share their answers. Then explain that just as geography influences their lives, the geography of ancient China influenced the history of that country. In this lesson, they will learn about five important geographic regions of China—the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau, the Northwestern Deserts, the Northeastern Plain, the North China Plain, and the Chang Jiang Basins—and how the geography of these regions affected the early settlement of China.



Graphic Organizer

1 Introduce Chapter 19 in *History Alive! The Ancient World*.

Have students read Section 19.1. Make sure they understand the meanings of the boldfaced key terms, which are defined in the Glossary. Tell students that in this chapter they will learn about five key areas of China and how the geography of these regions affected the settlement of China. (**Note:** You may want to have students use the Prereading Handout in Lesson Guide 1 to conduct a prereading of the chapter.)

2 Introduce the graphic organizer. Ask students to examine the graphic organizer on page 183. Ask, *What do you see? What country is shown on this map? How many elevation levels do you see? What is the range of each elevation level? Approximately how much of China would you guess is covered by regions of high elevation? Approximately how much of China would you guess is covered by regions of low elevation?* Tell students that they will create a relief map like this one and use it to learn how geography affected the settlement of China.



Problem Solving Groupwork

1 Arrange students in mixed-ability groups of four. You might want to prepare a transparency that shows students with whom they will work and where they will sit.

2 Present an overview of Chinese geography. Tell students that today China is the world's third-largest nation in area and has the largest population. Only Russia and Canada are larger in area. However, China was not always as large in area as it is now. It was not until the 1700s that it became the size it is today. Have students read Section 19.2, and then ask, *How large is China today? What is its population? What part of China is considered Inner China? What part is considered Outer China? What is Inner China like? What is Outer China like? Did most of the historical events of ancient China take place in Inner or Outer China?*

3 Introduce the activity. Tell students that China is a land of many geographic regions. There are towering mountains, scorching deserts, flat plains, flooding rivers, and narrow valleys. Each region has significantly affected China's history. In this activity, students will create a poster of China's five geographic regions. A relief map of China in the center of the poster will supply information about each surrounding region.

4 Distribute materials. Give each group the following:

- one copy of *Student Handout 19A: Relief Map of China*, *Student Handout 19B: Geographic Data Sheets*, and *Student Handout 19C: Steps for Creating a Geographic Poster of China*
- four sheets of 9-by-12-inch card stock
- two sheets of 12-by-18-inch card stock (or one sheet of 24-by-36-inch card stock)
- scrap cardboard (students can cut the pieces they need from corrugated boxes placed around the room)
- scissors, colored pencils or markers, and glue

5 Assign roles and review the steps for creating a geographic poster of China. Review Student Handout 19C with the class, and explain the four roles: Cartographer, Production Supervisor, Quality Control Supervisor, and Educational Coordinator. Assign each student a role for the activity. Explain that each student will be reading one (or two, for the Quality Control Supervisor) of Sections 19.3 to 19.7 in *History Alive! The Ancient World*. Tell students they will each be responsible for leading the group through one step in preparing the poster. Then review Steps 2 through 5 on Student Handout 19C.

6 Monitor groups as they create their posters. Allow students adequate time to complete their posters. Check their work and initial Student Handout 19C as they complete each of the five steps.

7 Have students complete their Reading Notes. Explain that students will complete the Reading Notes using their poster and *History Alive! The Ancient World*. Have them turn to Reading Notes 19 in their Interactive Student Notebooks. Explain that a hypothesis is a statement about something that has not yet been proven true or false. Ask students to complete Part 1 as a group, using only their poster for reference. Emphasize that for this part of the Reading Notes, they are practicing their interpretation skills and will not be penalized for any incorrect responses. After they finish, they should complete Part 2, where they read the indicated section, add any important information to or correct any errors in Part 1, and then complete the map at the bottom of the page. (**Note:** You may want to check that groups have completed Part 1 of each page before students open their books.)

8 When students have completed all pages of the Reading Notes, hold a class discussion using these questions:

For page 1:

- Using only your poster, what reasons did you give in support of the first hypothesis? (*Hypothesis 1*: Most early people settled on the North China Plain because of its geography.)
- What additional reasons did you find in the reading?
- Ruins of early farming communities have also been found in the Chang Jiang Basins. Why do you think fewer people would settle here?

For page 2:

- Using only your poster, what reasons did you give in support of the second hypothesis? (*Hypothesis 2*: China was isolated from other civilizations because of its geography.)
- What additional reasons did you find in the reading?
- Do you think China's isolation helped or hurt the country? How?

For page 3:

- Using only your poster, what reasons did you give in support of the third hypothesis? (*Hypothesis 3*: Because of geography, several ways of life developed in China.)
- What additional reasons did you find in the reading?
- Would the differences in ways of life make the country stronger or weaker? Why?



Processing

Project *Transparency 19: Chinese Scroll*. Explain that the Chinese often drew illustrations of their landscape on scrolls. This is part of a scroll that shows peasants in the North China Plain trying to control the Huang He. Have students turn to Processing 19 in their Interactive Student Notebooks. Explain that they should choose two geographic regions and illustrate the geography and way of life in each region. Their scrolls might show physical features (such as mountains and rivers), climate, and natural vegetation, in addition to cultural features (such as food, shelter, clothing, or activities) characteristic of each region. Below the scroll, they are to write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the two regions.



Assessment

Masters for assessment follow the next page.

1. D 2. C 3. A 4. B 5. A
6. C 7. A 8. B

9. Possible answers:

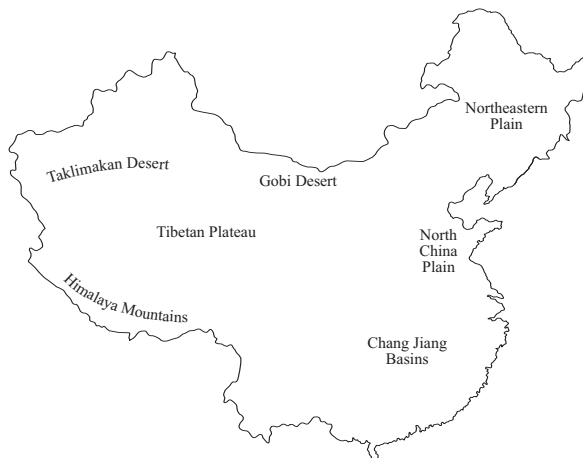
Yellow River, benefit: good silt for farming; *Challenge:* frequent flooding

Gobi Desert, benefit: protected Inner China from invaders; *Challenge:* nearly impossible to live there

Chang Jiang Basins, benefit: good for growing rice; *Challenge:* little land for farming or grazing because of rainforests

Tibetan Plateau, benefit: protected Inner China from invaders, grasses supported livestock; *Challenge:* too dry and cold for farming

10.



11. The bulleted points can provide a rubric for this item. (**Note:** You might require that students write an expository essay of 500–700 words.)



Online Resources

Further resources for Lesson 19: Geography and the Early Settlement of China can be found at Online Resources for *History Alive! The Ancient World* at www.teachtci.com/historyalive/.

- Internet Connections: Ancient China



Options for Students with Diverse Needs

See page 764 for tips on adapting this lesson to meet the needs of

- English language learners.
- learners reading and writing below grade level.
- learners with special education needs.
- advanced learners.

Fill in the bubble beside the best answer to each question.

- Which of these words best describes China's climate?
 - A. uniform
 - B. mild
 - C. moderate
 - D. varied
- China has the _____ of any country in the world.
 - A. largest area
 - B. longest river
 - C. largest population
 - D. worst weather
- Look at the table below. Which word belongs in the shaded box?

The Geography of Outer China

Northwest	desert
Southwest	plateau
Northeast	

 - A. plains
 - B. mountains
 - C. rivers
 - D. valleys
- Because the Tibetan Plateau has a very high elevation, it also has
 - A. a lot of rain.
 - B. low temperatures.
 - C. large deserts.
 - D. constant flooding.
- What protected Inner China from invaders who might have tried to enter from the northwest?
 - A. the Taklimakan Desert
 - B. the Tibetan Plateau
 - C. the Himalaya Mountains
 - D. the Turfan Depression
- Both the Sungari and the Chang Jiang rivers are
 - A. filled with silt.
 - B. yellow.
 - C. used for transportation by boat.
 - D. used as roads during winter.
- Because rice requires warm weather and a lot of moisture, where did the ancient Chinese grow rice?
 - A. the Chang Jiang Basins
 - B. the North China Plain
 - C. the Tibetan Plateau
 - D. the Northeastern Plain
- In ancient times, why did more people settle in Inner China than in Outer China?
 - A. because Inner China had less flooding
 - B. because Inner China had fertile land
 - C. because Outer China had too many animals
 - D. because Outer China had too much rain

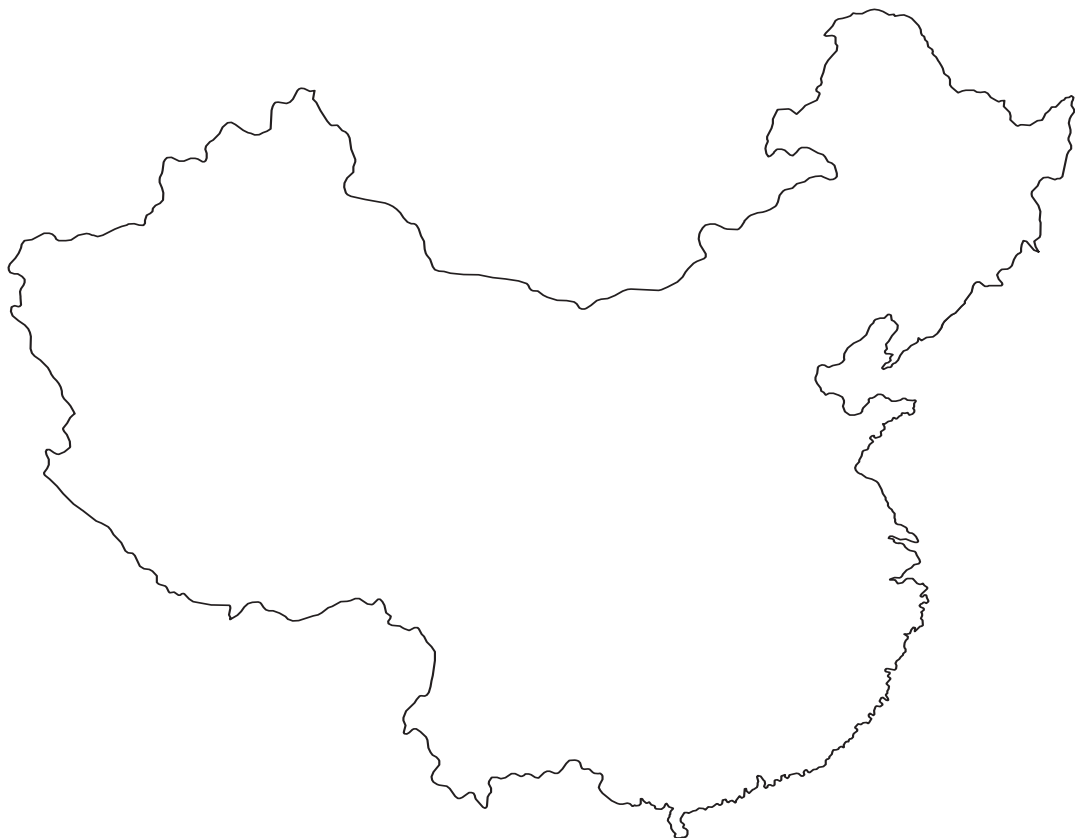
Use your knowledge of social studies to complete the items below.

9. Physical geography affects where people settle and what their lives are like. The table identifies physical features in China. List one way each physical feature benefited early settlers and one way it challenged them.

Physical Feature	Benefit	Challenge
Yellow River		
Gobi Desert		
Chang Jiang Basins		
Tibetan Plateau		

10. Below is an outline map of China. Label the following physical features in their proper locations:

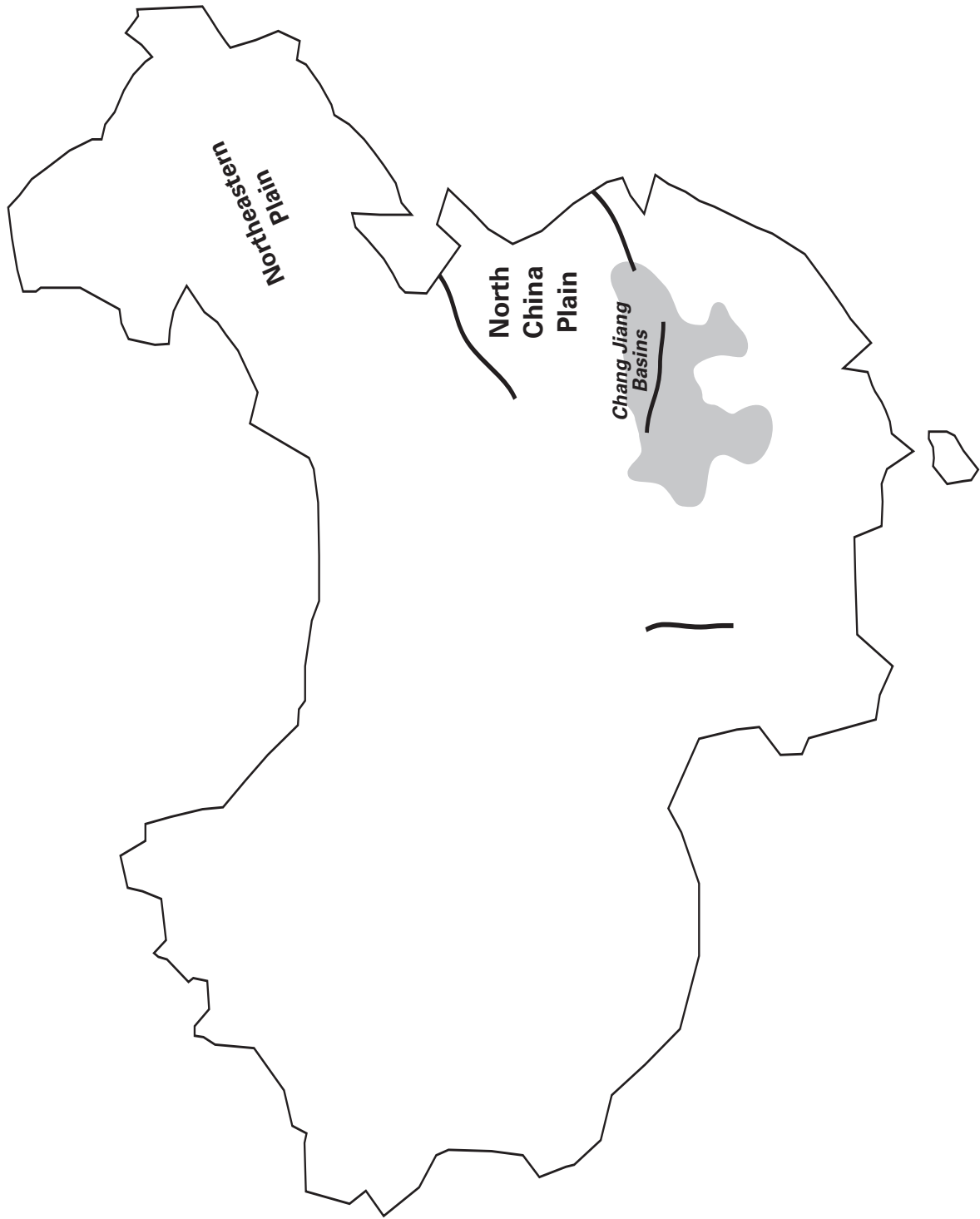
- Chang Jiang Basins
- Gobi Desert
- Himalaya Mountains
- North China Plain
- Northeastern Plain
- Taklimakan Desert
- Tibetan Plateau



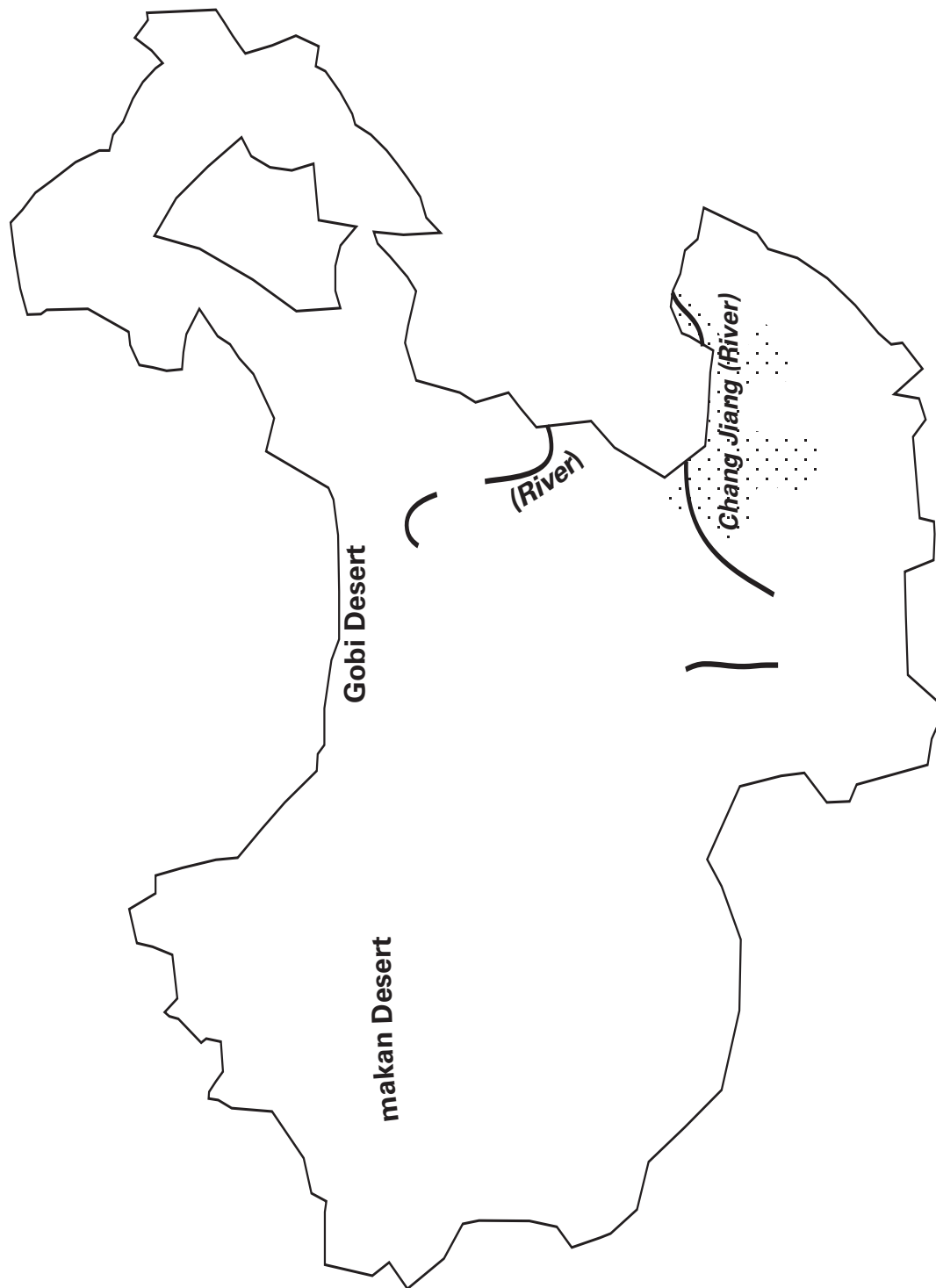
Follow the directions to complete the item below.

11. Pretend you live in ancient China. Write a letter introducing yourself to a pen pal. In your letter, do these things:
- Identify the region you live in.
 - Describe the climate of your region.
 - Describe the land and its vegetation.
 - Identify the cultural features of your region by explaining how the climate, topography, and vegetation affect your life.
 - Describe what an average day is like for you.

Elevation Level 1



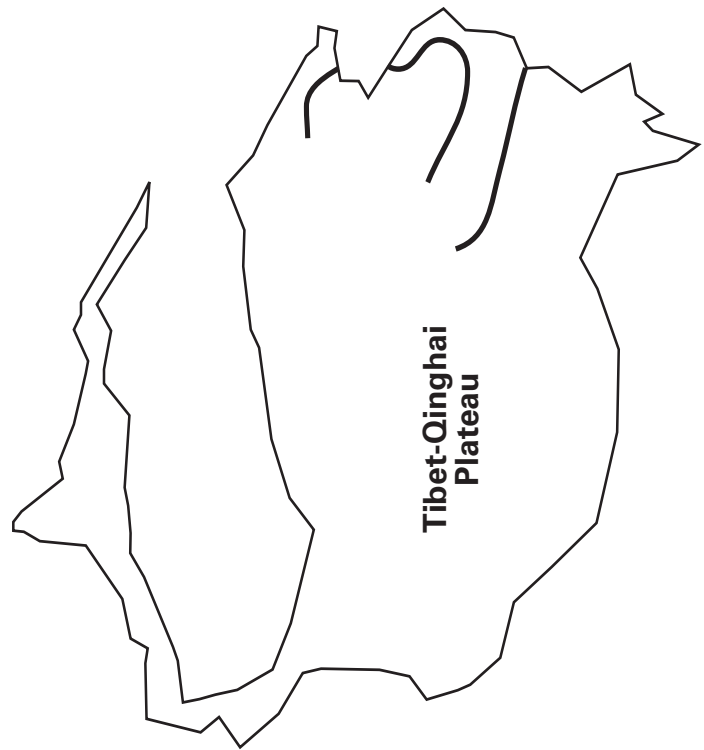
Elevation Level 2



Elevation Level 3



Elevation Level 4





CHINA

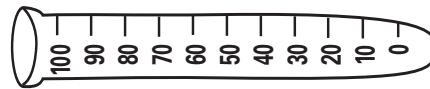
19.3 The Tibet-Qinghai Plateau



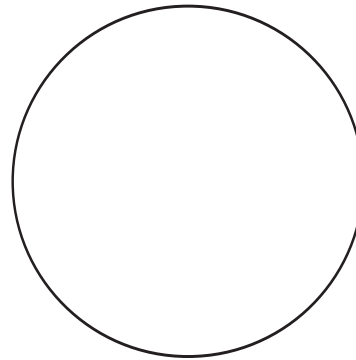
Summer Temperature (°F)



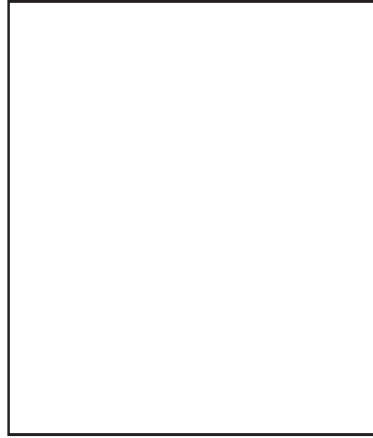
Winter Temperature (°F)



Annual Precipitation (inches)



Natural Vegetation



Physical Features

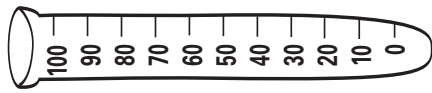
19.4 The Northwestern Deserts



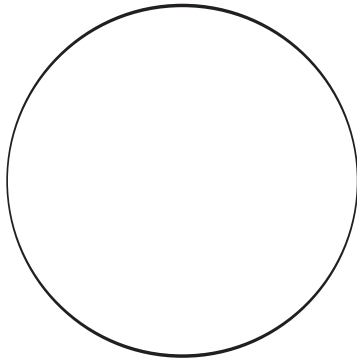
Summer Temperature (°F)



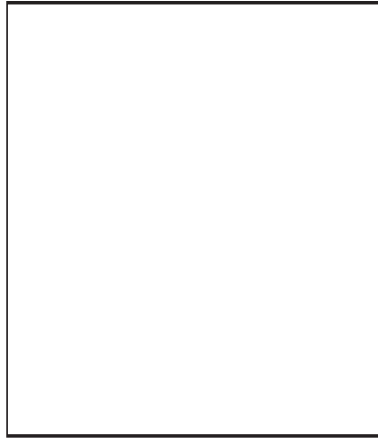
Winter Temperature (°F)



Annual Precipitation (inches)



Natural Vegetation



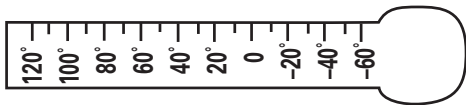
Physical Features



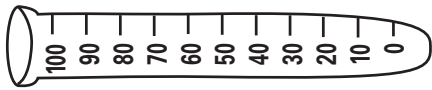
19.5 The Northeastern Plain



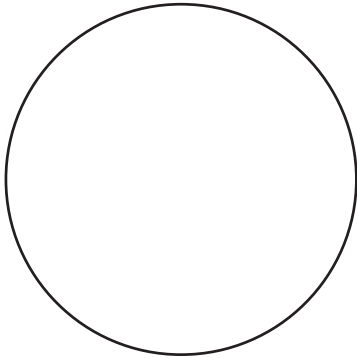
Summer Temperature (°F)



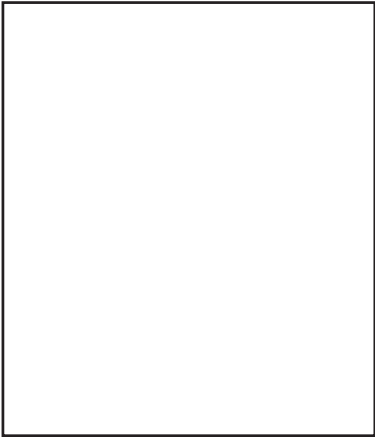
Winter Temperature (°F)



Annual Precipitation (inches)



Natural Vegetation

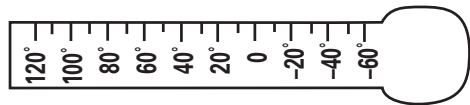


Physical Features

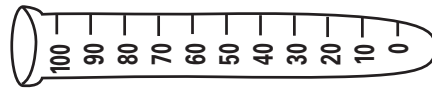
19.6 The North China Plain



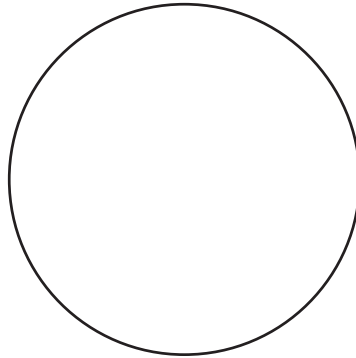
Summer Temperature (°F)



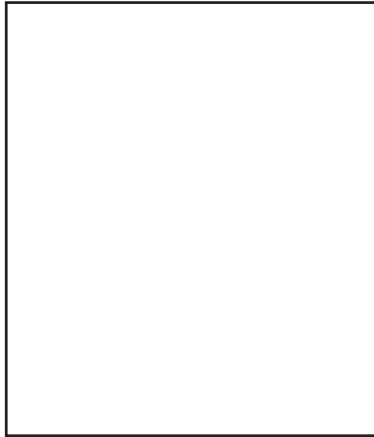
Winter Temperature (°F)



Annual Precipitation (inches)

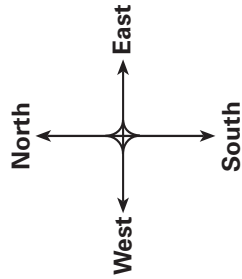


Natural Vegetation



Physical Features

Elevation	
Level 1: 0 – 1,150 feet	<input type="text"/>
Level 2: 1,150 – 4,500 feet	<input type="text"/>
Level 3: 4,500 – 8,200 feet	<input type="text"/>
Level 4: 8,200 – 18,000 feet	<input type="text"/>



19.7 The Middle and Lower Chang Jiang Basins

<p>Summer Temperature (°F)</p>	<p>Winter Temperature (°F)</p>	<p>Annual Precipitation (inches)</p>	
			Natural Vegetation
			Physical Features



Work with your group to create a poster on China. The poster will include a relief map of China and information about the country's five important geographic regions.

_____ **Step 1: Review the roles.** Your teacher will assign you a role. With your group, read the information below. Make sure everyone understands his or her responsibilities.

Cartographer You will lead the group during Step 2. You will assign each group member a page of Student Handout 19A to cut out and assemble into the final relief map. You will also complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau.

Production Supervisor You will lead the group during Step 3. You will also complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Northwestern Deserts.

Quality Control Supervisor You will lead the group during Step 4. You will also complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Northeastern and North China Plains.

Educational Coordinator You will lead the group during Step 5. You will also complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Chang Jiang Basins.

_____ **Step 2: Assemble the relief map of China.** Group members should follow these directions for completing *Student Handout 19A: Relief Map of China*:

- Color Elevation Level 1 green, Elevation Level 2 yellow, Elevation Level 3 brown, and Elevation Level 4 purple. Attach each elevation level to a piece of card stock, and carefully cut it out.
- Cut out small pieces of corrugated cardboard and glue them to the back of Elevation Level 2. Then position Elevation Level 2 on top of Elevation Level 1 and glue it down. Make sure the borders of the map and the rivers are properly positioned. Repeat the process for Elevation Levels 3 and 4, making sure the words and borders are properly positioned.

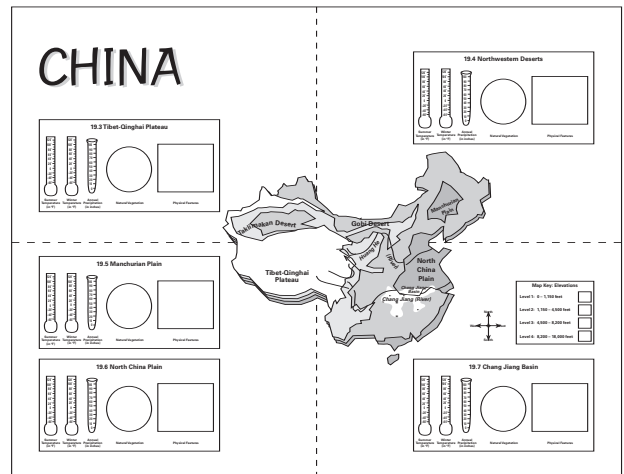
_____ **Step 3: Complete the information on the assigned page of Student Handout 19B: Geographic Data Sheets.** Each person in the group is responsible for reading the following sections of *History Alive! The Ancient World* and completing the corresponding Geographic Data Sheet. In the information box for each region, color the thermometers and rain gauge to show the climate. Draw and label illustrations of the

Steps for Creating a Geographic Poster of China

vegetation and physical features (rivers, mountains, sand dunes, and the like) of the region.

- *Cartographer:* Read Section 19.3. Complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau and color the word *China*.
- *Production Supervisor:* Read Section 19.4. Complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Northwestern Deserts and color in the key for the elevation levels.
- *Quality Control Supervisor:* Read Sections 19.5 and 19.6. Complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Northeastern and North China Plains.
- *Educational Coordinator:* Read Section 19.7. Complete the Geographic Data Sheet for the Chang Jiang Basins. Color-code the elevation key to match the colors on the relief map.

____ **Step 4: Assemble the poster.** If necessary, tape two pieces of 18-by-24-inch cardstock together to make a 24-by-36-inch base. Place the four Geographic Data Sheets on the 24-by-36-inch base. The arrows on each page should point to the center. When they are properly positioned, glue them down. Then glue your relief map in the center of the poster so that it covers the arrows. Make sure the words on the map are right side up. Your poster should look like this:



____ **Step 5: Share the information collected about each geographic region.** Each group member should share what he or she discovered about his or her assigned region.

When sharing, follow this procedure:

- Have the group members open to the page of *History Alive! The Ancient World* that you used to complete the information in the box on the poster.
- Describe the elevation of your region using the relief map.
- Explain the information on your Geographic Data Sheet. Use the image in the book to make the information clear.

Be sure all group members know these things:

- whether the elevation is high or low
- whether the climate is hot or cold, wet or dry
- the type of natural vegetation found in the region
- any important physical features of the area such as rivers, mountains, and sand dunes



GUIDE TO READING NOTES 19

Part 1: Read the hypothesis. Using only your poster with the relief map, give four reasons that support this hypothesis. (**Hint:** Include reasons why some other regions would not be good for settlement.)

Hypothesis 1: Most early people settled on the North China Plain because of its geography.

These four reasons support this hypothesis: Possible answers:

1. The Tibet-Qinghai Plateau and Northeastern Plain are too cold and dry for agriculture.
2. The Northwestern Deserts are too dry for agriculture.
3. The heavy rains of the Chang Jiang Basins may have made farming difficult.
4. The North China Plain was ideal because it has water, fertile soil, and a moderate climate.

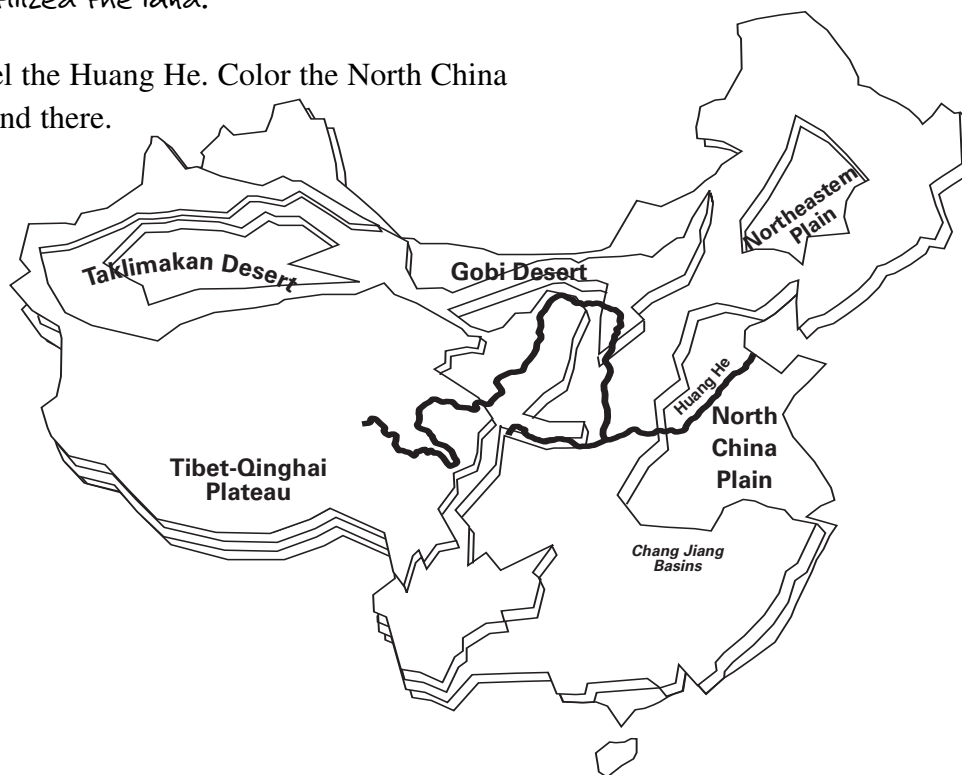
Part 2

1. Read Section 19.8. Add any additional information that shows that most early people settled on the North China Plain because of its geography.

Students might add information not covered in Part 1 such as that the Huang He was a source of water for farming and that silt from the flooding of the river fertilized the land.

2. On the map, draw in and label the Huang He. Color the North China Plain the color of the soil found there.

Students should color the North China Plain yellow.





Part 1: Read the hypothesis. Using only your poster with the relief map, give two reasons that support this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: China was isolated from other civilizations because of its geography.

These two reasons support this hypothesis: Possible answers:

1. The high Tibet-Qinghai Plateau made contact with lands to the southwest of China difficult.
2. The dry Gobi and Taklimakan Deserts made contact with lands to the northwest of China difficult.

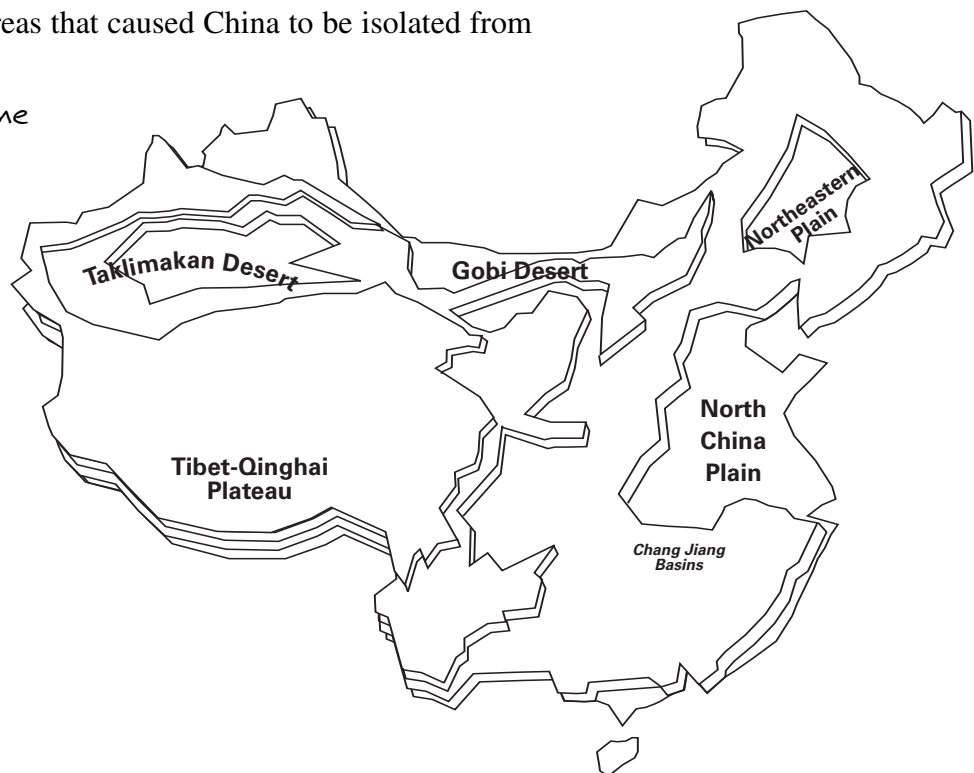
Part 2

1. Read Section 19.9. Add any additional information that shows China was isolated from other civilizations because of its geography.

Students might add information not covered in Part 1 such as that the towering mountains, rocky plateau, and cold climate in the southwest, and the large deserts in the northwest, formed natural barriers.

2. On the map, color the areas that caused China to be isolated from other civilizations.

Students should color the Tibet-Qinghai Plateau, the Taklimakan Desert, and the Gobi Desert.





GUIDE TO READING NOTES 19

Part 1: Read the hypothesis. Using only your poster with the relief map, give five reasons that support this hypothesis. (**Hint:** Think about physical features, climate, and vegetation in each geographic region. What differences might result in how people lived, what they ate, or what kinds of shelter they used?)

Hypothesis 3: Because of geography, several ways of life developed in China.

These five reasons support this hypothesis: Possible answers:

1. On the Tibetan Plateau, people raised yaks.
2. In the Northwestern Deserts, people living on the oases raised crops and animals.
3. On the Northeastern Plain, people raised horses, sheep, and other animals.
4. On the North China Plain, people grew crops.
5. In the Chang Jiang Basins, people grew rice.

Part 2

1. Students might add information not covered in Part 1 such as that the people on the Tibetan Plateau moved frequently to find grazing land; in the Northwestern Deserts, people built houses of mud; in the Northeastern Plain, nomads raised animals and lived in tents; people on the North China Plain grew grains, raised animals, and built homes of mud; and people in the Chang Jiang Basins built permanent shelters.

Part 2

1. Read Section 19.10. Add any additional information that shows that several ways of life developed in China because of geography.

See above right.

2. In each box, draw one type of food, shelter, or activity (such as farming or herding animals) that might be found in that geographic region.

Drawings will vary.

