

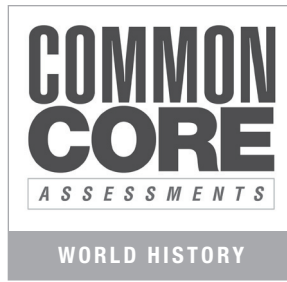
WORLD HISTORY

Medieval China

COMMON CORE

A S S E S S M E N T S

MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY



Medieval China

BY JONATHAN BURACK



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Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about medieval China. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical world history class.

★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- **A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of world history**

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards—Assessment 1 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 1, Assessment 2 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 2, and so on. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- **Based on primary or secondary sources**

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone. Links to online versions of print media are available in the Bibliography. Please note that these links were valid at the time of production, but the websites may have since been discontinued.

- **Brief tasks promoting historical literacy**

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the students' mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- **Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments**

A *basic* and an *advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *basic* assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *advanced* assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *basic* version.

- **Easy to use as both learning and assessment tools**

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess students' historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- **Evaluating student responses**

Brief but specific suggestions are provided, defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly, they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

Assessment 1 *Basic Level*

Confucian Education

★ *Key Ideas and Details*

1. (6–8) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should explain that Zhu Xi's student sees a difference between "real learning," which he wants, and the effort it takes to prepare for an exam. He fears the exam preparation will take up all his learning time. Document 1 helps to clarify why he is worried. It explains how challenging the exams are—demanding a great deal of reading, memorization, poetry writing, etc. The exams are enormously time-consuming, given that they occur in "several stages" over several years, are highly competitive, and often have to be taken again. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. Some may feel the advice to divide time into ten days for exams and twenty for "real learning" is realistic if the student is, as Zhu Xi puts it, "determined." Others might note the very high career stakes of the exams, the importance of students doing well on them, and the intense competition students faced. Together these could make it very hard for students to focus on anything else during the long learning process this examination system demanded.

Confucian Education

Directions: This exercise asks you to read a secondary source document and a primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The teachings of Confucius became the basis for training officials in China's imperial government. This started during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). It developed during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) and became especially important in the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE). Officials had to take and pass very challenging civil service exams based on Confucius and the written classics associated with him. The exams were given in several stages, starting with those at the local level and ending with those at the imperial palace. Students spent many years preparing, often taking the exams several times. The ultimate goal was the jinshi, the high-level degree that usually led immediately to an important administrative position in the imperial bureaucracy. The exams were open to all, but it was much easier for wealthy and aristocratic families to afford the extensive preparatory schooling their children would need. In other words, the system was not perfectly meritocratic.

The competition was tough. The exams demanded thorough knowledge about and memorization of the literary classics. Students also needed to be able to compose poems and write in the formal literary styles preferred by examiners. The exams did not stress technical or administrative skills. Their aim was to produce refined men who shared a common literary heritage. These “scholar officials” would form an elite that was loyal and obedient not so much to the aristocracy as to the emperor and the imperial system itself.

Source Information: Document 1 is a secondary source about China's imperial examination system, which reached its full development during the Song dynasty. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This particular secondary source historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Document 2: A Primary Source

A student asked whether studying for the examinations would interfere with his efforts at real learning. Zhu Xi responded, “Master Cheng said, ‘Don’t worry about it interfering with your efforts, worry about it robbing you of your determination.’ If you spend ten days a month preparing for the examinations, you will still have twenty days to do real study. If it changes your determination, however, there is no cure.”

Source Information: In the Song dynasty, a revival of Confucianism was led by several great teachers. The students who gathered around them were mainly preparing for the civil service examinations. Their teachers explained the wisdom of Confucius and the other sages, and showed students how to apply that wisdom both to statecraft and to their personal lives. One of these teachers was Zhu Xi (1130–1200). He wrote many books and also served several times in office. Zhu Xi was himself a follower of the Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi. He refers to one of them in this document, a short passage based on what his disciples recorded. This passage is found in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2nd ed., edited by Patricia Buckley Ebrey (New York: Free Press, 1993), p. 173.

Assessment Questions

1. Consider the problem worrying Zhu Xi’s student in Document 2. Use Document 1 to explain why he is worried. Cite at least three details from Document 1 to support your answer.
2. Based on Document 1, how realistic do you think Zhu Xi’s advice to the student is? Cite details from the documents to support your answer.

Assessment 1 *Advanced Level*

Confucian Education

★ *Key Ideas and Details*

1. (9–10) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
1. (11–12) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past. As called for by the Common Core standard for grades 11–12, it also prompts students to relate the textual details to “an understanding of the text as a whole.”

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question may vary. They should all be able to explain Zhu Xi's view that the “effort” the student must make to gain real learning will be no problem if his “determination” is strong. Zhu Xi says that preparing for the exams should only take ten days of “effort” each month, leaving twenty more for real learning, *if* the student is determined to use those days for that purpose. Document 1 helps explain why the student might still have doubts about this, given that these rigorous exams occur in stages over the years, and given the enormous amounts of reading, memorization, poetry writing, etc., required. Some might also note the very high career stakes for students taking these exams and the intense competition they faced. Together these could make it hard for them to focus on anything else during the long learning process this system demanded. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. A strength of this system could be the huge effort and dedication this grueling process demanded. This could result in the selection of very hardworking people for the bureaucracy. Also, the course of study instilled a set of traditional ideas and ideals stressing selfless and highly moral behavior in officials. However, the exams did not test for specific administrative or technical knowledge or skill. The scholar officials it produced would not necessarily be the most efficient, or the most innovative.

Confucian Education

Directions: This exercise asks you to read a secondary source document and a primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: (9–10) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. **(11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

The teachings of Confucius became the basis for training officials in China's imperial government. This started during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). It developed during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) and became especially important in the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE). Officials had to take and pass very challenging civil service exams based on Confucius and the written classics associated with him. The exams were given in several stages, starting with those at the local level and ending with those at the imperial palace. Students spent many years preparing, often taking the exams several times. The ultimate goal was the jinshi, the high-level degree that usually led immediately to an important administrative position in the imperial bureaucracy. The exams were open to all, but it was much easier for wealthy and aristocratic families to afford the extensive preparatory schooling their children would need. In other words, the system was not perfectly meritocratic.

The competition was tough. The exams demanded thorough knowledge about and memorization of the literary classics. Students also needed to be able to compose poems and write in the formal literary styles preferred by examiners. The exams did not stress technical or administrative skills. Their aim was to produce refined men who shared a common literary heritage. These “scholar officials” would form an elite that was loyal and obedient not so much to the aristocracy as to the emperor and the imperial system itself.

Source Information: Document 1 is a secondary source about China's imperial examination system, which reached its full development during the Song dynasty. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This particular secondary source historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Document 2: A Primary Source

A student asked whether studying for the examinations would interfere with his efforts at real learning. Zhu Xi responded, “Master Cheng said, ‘Don’t worry about it interfering with your efforts, worry about it robbing you of your determination.’ If you spend ten days a month preparing for the examinations, you will still have twenty days to do real study. If it changes your determination, however, there is no cure.”

Source Information: In the Song era, a revival of Confucianism was led by several great teachers. The students who gathered around them were mainly preparing for the civil service examinations. Their teachers explained the wisdom of Confucius and the other sages, and showed students how to apply that wisdom both to statecraft and to their personal lives. One of these teachers was Zhu Xi (1130–1200). He wrote many books and also served several times in office. Zhu Xi was himself a follower of the Cheng brothers, Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi. He refers to one of them in this document, a short passage based on what his disciples recorded. This passage is found in *Chinese Civilization: A Sourcebook*, 2nd ed., edited by Patricia Buckley Ebrey (New York: Free Press, 1993), p. 173.

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 2, Zhu Xi tells his students that studying for the exams won't interfere with their “efforts” at real learning if they maintain their “determination.” Using both documents, explain what you think Zhu Xi means and whether you think his advice is realistic. Cite details from the documents to support your answer.
2. Based on these two documents, describe what you see as the strengths and the weaknesses of China's examination system as a way to develop and select imperial officials.

Assessment 2 *Basic Level*

“The Charcoal-Seller”

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (6–8)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 2 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the assessment question should see that the poem describes the trials and sufferings of a seller of charcoal who is poor, works hard as a small trader, lacks enough sales to earn much of an income, faces low prices for the coal he sells, endures harsh winter weather, and has to put up with government officials who suddenly seize his coal and against whom he is powerless to complain. The poem evokes sympathy for a man who is at the mercy of nature, economic forces beyond his control, and arbitrary government.

“The Charcoal-Seller”

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer one question about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

CCS Standard 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

A Primary Source Document

The Charcoal-Seller

An old charcoal seller
Cutting wood and burning charcoal in the forest of the Southern Mountain.
His face, stained with dust and ashes, has turned to the color of smoke.
The hair on his temples is streaked with gray: his ten fingers are black.
The money he gets by selling charcoal, how far does it go?
It is just enough to clothe his limbs and put food in his mouth.
Although, alas, the coat on his back is a coat without lining,
He hopes for the coming of cold weather, to send up the price of coal!
Last night, outside the city,—a whole foot of snow;
At dawn he drives the charcoal wagon along the frozen ruts.
Oxen,—weary; man,—hungry: the sun, already high;
Outside the Gate, to the south of the Market, at last they stop in the mud.
Suddenly, a pair of prancing horsemen. Who can it be coming?
A public official in a yellow coat and a boy in a white shirt.
In their hands they hold a written warrant: on their tongues—the words of an order;
They chase the oxen away, turn the wagon and lead it off north.
A whole wagon of charcoal,
More than a thousand pieces!
If officials choose to take it away, the woodman may not complain.
Half a piece of red silk and a single yard of damask,
The Courtiers have draped over the oxen’s neck, as the price of a wagon of coal!

Source Information: This poem is “The Charcoal-Seller,” written by the Tang poet Bai Juyi (772–846 CE). With one minor alteration, this is the version of the poem found in *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, translated by Arthur Waley (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1919), pp. 199–200.

Assessment Question

This poem’s central idea is its overall view of the life of a single charcoal seller. What overall view of his life does the poem communicate? Cite several phrases or lines that help to illustrate what this man’s life was like.

Assessment 2 *Advanced Level***“The Charcoal-Seller”**★ *Key Ideas and Details*

- 2. (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- 2. (11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their world history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 2 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. Moreover, when it comes to the unique demands of thinking historically we do also want students to use knowledge of historical context to help them interpret sources. But that sort of contextualizing also demands that students suspend their own present-day ideas while studying a source. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that the poem depicts the trials and sufferings of a seller of charcoal who is poor, works hard as a small trader, lacks enough sales to earn much of an income, faces low prices for the coal he sells, endures harsh winter weather, and has to put up with powerful and arbitrary government officials who suddenly seize his coal. The poem evokes sympathy for a man who is at the mercy of nature, economic forces beyond his control, and arbitrary government. Answers to the second assessment question should be able to make many broader inferences from the poem—for example, that some people in China live by trading and selling goods for a profit in a market economy of some sort; that travel via ox-driven carts on dirt roads is common for merchants, traders, and others; that winters in some areas are harsh; that charcoal and coal are key items of value; that marketplaces and cities exist; that impersonal forces can push prices up or down for traders such as this one; that some people are desperately poor; that a powerful government existed that could act in arbitrary ways, though with some kind of legal system in place (as shown by the warrant), etc.

“The Charcoal-Seller”

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 2: (9–10) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. **(11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

A Primary Source Document

The Charcoal-Seller

An old charcoal seller
Cutting wood and burning charcoal in the forest of the Southern Mountain.
His face, stained with dust and ashes, has turned to the color of smoke.
The hair on his temples is streaked with gray: his ten fingers are black.
The money he gets by selling charcoal, how far does it go?
It is just enough to clothe his limbs and put food in his mouth.
Although, alas, the coat on his back is a coat without lining,
He hopes for the coming of cold weather, to send up the price of coal!
Last night, outside the city,—a whole foot of snow;
At dawn he drives the charcoal wagon along the frozen ruts.
Oxen,—weary; man,—hungry: the sun, already high;
Outside the Gate, to the south of the Market, at last they stop in the mud.
Suddenly, a pair of prancing horsemen. Who can it be coming?
A public official in a yellow coat and a boy in a white shirt.
In their hands they hold a written warrant: on their tongues—the words of an order;
They chase the oxen away, turn the wagon and lead it off north.
A whole wagon of charcoal,
More than a thousand pieces!
If officials choose to take it away, the woodman may not complain.
Half a piece of red silk and a single yard of damask,
The Courtiers have draped over the oxen’s neck, as the price of a wagon of coal!

Source Information: This poem is “The Charcoal-Seller,” written by the Tang poet Bai Juyi (772–846 CE). With one minor alteration, this is the version of the poem found in *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, translated by Arthur Waley (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1919), pp. 199–200.

Assessment Questions

1. The central idea in this poem is its overall view of what life is like for this charcoal seller. What overall view of his life does the poem seek to communicate? Cite several phrases or lines that support your answer.
2. Aside from this central idea, the poem suggests many other details about life in China. What aspects of life in China can you learn about or infer from this poem?

Assessment 3 *Basic Level*

An Outsider's Observations of China

★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (6–8)** Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

★ Using This Assessment

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Assessment 3 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a text.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question could note that the passage starts off stating that China is “considered the richest and most noble realm in the world.” It refers to its “countless luxuries, treasures, and wealth.” It claims that China’s huge quantity of varied goods “with indescribably delicate workmanship” is beyond what any other society can produce. On the other hand it looks down on the Chinese in many other ways, saying that “although they are full of genius with regard to making all sorts of material goods, no acquaintance with the spiritual exists among them.” Insulting remarks about their appearance are made, while they are also accused of having an arrogant attitude of superiority to all other peoples. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. The praise and critical comments are scattered throughout and often follow one another rapidly. Answers should grapple with the way the passage develops an overall impression. Some may reasonably see it as more positive; others may reasonably see it as more negative. What all answers should notice is that the passage does seem built up around the idea of making judgments about the Chinese, pro or con.

An Outsider's Observations of China

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

A Primary Source Document

The kingdom of Cathay is considered the richest and most noble realm in the world. Full of people and incalculable splendor, it is located by the shore of the Ocean sea. There are so many islands in the sea bordering it that no one knows their number, since no one has visited all of them. Yet as far as the foot of man has traveled thereabouts, countless luxuries, treasures, and wealth have been observed. Olive oil is an item which fetches a great price there and is much esteemed, and kings and grandees have kept it with great care as a major medicine.

There are numerous strange animals in the kingdom of Cathay, which I shall not mention. People there are creative and quite clever; and thus they have little regard for the accomplishments of other people in all the arts and sciences. They claim that they themselves are the only ones to see with two eyes, while the Latins see with but one eye, and all other peoples are blind. And their word is confirmed by the fact that, generally, they regard other people as imbeciles. For such a quantity of varied and marvelous wares with indescribably delicate workmanship is brought from that kingdom, that no one is capable of matching such goods in the scales.

All the people in that kingdom are called Cathayans, and among them are many attractive men and women. But by and large, they have tiny eyes and are beardless by nature. These Cathayans have very beautiful letters, in some respects similar in beauty to Latin letters. It is difficult to describe the [religious] doctrines of the people of this kingdom. For some folk worship idols made out of metal; some worship cattle (since they work the land which brings forth wheat and other produce); some worship gigantic trees; some, the natural elements; some, the stars. There are those who worship the sun and those who worship the moon. Yet others have no belief or doctrine and lead their lives like irrational beasts. Although they are full of genius with regard to making all sorts of material goods, no acquaintance with the spiritual exists among them.

[In warfare] the people of this country are very cowardly, and must be heavily armed. However, they are extremely skilled on the seas where they defeat their enemies more so than on land. They possess many types of weapons not found among other peoples. As for the money which this people uses, it is made of sedge, of square shape and bears the royal stamp,

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and it is based on this stamp that the money's value is determined, great or small. If the money becomes worn through age, they take it to the royal court and exchange it for fresh money. They make vessels and other ornaments out of gold and other metals.

Only in the west is Cathay bordered by another kingdom, that of Tars. In the north is the Belgean desert, and to the south are the aforementioned islands in the Ocean sea.

Source Information: This document is a passage from *The Flower of Histories of the East*, a book that first appeared in 1307 dictated in French by Het'um, an Armenian statesman and general. His account of Cathay (China) shows how much, or how little, even nearby outsiders knew about China as late as the 1300s. Het'um's account was later published in Armenian by Frère Hayton and Mkrtych Awgerean in *Het'um Patmich' T'at'arac'* [Het'um's History of the Tartars] (Venetik : I Tparani Srboyn Ghazaru, 1842). This passage is Book 1, Chapter 1 of Robert Bedrosian's English translation of that book.

Assessment Questions

1. In this passage, two themes are developed: great admiration for China, but also some contempt or scorn for China. Cite some examples of each attitude.
2. Of these two attitudes, does the passage as a whole stress one over the other? What is the overall impression the passage seeks to convey?

Assessment 3 *Advanced Level*

An Outsider's Observations of China

★ *Key Ideas and Details*

- 3. (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 3. (11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 3 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. The activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a complex text. It also asks them to evaluate the explanation offered in the passage and consider how adequate it is.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note the account often seems to set positive and negative judgments about China next to each other in confusing ways. It refers to its "countless luxuries, treasures, and wealth" and its "varied and marvelous wares with indescribably delicate workmanship." Then it jumps to remarks about its "strange animals," then to comments about its "creative and clever people," their attitude of superiority to others, their written language, their varying religious beliefs, and their weapons and money. In other words, the passage is largely a random series of observations—though some may see a broad theme in the comment that "although they are full of genius with regard to making all sorts of material goods, no acquaintance with the spiritual exists among them." Answers to the second assessment question may vary. At a few points, Het'um admits to a lack of information on a topic—the islands off of China's coast, the exact nature of their religious beliefs, etc. Nevertheless, the passage makes many sweeping generalizations, some of which are positive and some of which appear negatively biased—for example, remarks about the physical appearance of the Chinese, their cowardice in warfare, their lack of spirituality, etc.

An Outsider's Observations of China

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 3: (9–10) Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. **(11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

A Primary Source Document

The kingdom of Cathay is considered the richest and most noble realm in the world. Full of people and incalculable splendor, it is located by the shore of the Ocean sea. There are so many islands in the sea bordering it that no one knows their number, since no one has visited all of them. Yet as far as the foot of man has traveled thereabouts, countless luxuries, treasures, and wealth have been observed. Olive oil is an item which fetches a great price there and is much esteemed, and kings and grandees have kept it with great care as a major medicine.

There are numerous strange animals in the kingdom of Cathay, which I shall not mention. People there are creative and quite clever; and thus they have little regard for the accomplishments of other people in all the arts and sciences. They claim that they themselves are the only ones to see with two eyes, while the Latins see with but one eye, and all other peoples are blind. And their word is confirmed by the fact that, generally, they regard other people as imbeciles. For such a quantity of varied and marvelous wares with indescribably delicate workmanship is brought from that kingdom, that no one is capable of matching such goods in the scales.

All the people in that kingdom are called Cathayans, and among them are many attractive men and women. But by and large, they have tiny eyes and are beardless by nature. These Cathayans have very beautiful letters, in some respects similar in beauty to Latin letters. It is difficult to describe the [religious] doctrines of the people of this kingdom. For some folk worship idols made out of metal; some worship cattle (since they work the land which brings forth wheat and other produce); some worship gigantic trees; some, the natural elements; some, the stars. There are those who worship the sun and those who worship the moon. Yet others have no belief or doctrine and lead their lives like irrational beasts. Although they are full of genius with regard to making all sorts of material goods, no acquaintance with the spiritual exists among them.

[In warfare] the people of this country are very cowardly, and must be heavily armed. However, they are extremely skilled on the seas where they defeat their enemies more so than

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on land. They possess many types of weapons not found among other peoples. As for the money which this people uses, it is made of sedge, of square shape and bears the royal stamp, and it is based on this stamp that the money's value is determined, great or small. If the money becomes worn through age, they take it to the royal court and exchange it for fresh money. They make vessels and other ornaments out of gold and other metals.

Only in the west is Cathay bordered by another kingdom, that of Tars. In the north is the Belgean desert, and to the south are the aforementioned islands in the Ocean sea.

Source Information: This document is a passage from *The Flower of Histories of the East*, a book that first appeared in 1307 dictated in French by Het'um, an Armenian statesman and general. His account of Cathay (China) shows how much, or how little, even nearby outsiders knew about China as late as the 1300s. Het'um's account was later published in Armenian by Frère Hayton and Mkrtych Awgerean in *Het'um Patmich' T'at'arac'* [Het'um's History of the Tartars] (Venetik : I Tparani Srboyn Ghazaru, 1842). This passage is Book 1, Chapter 1 of Robert Bedrosian's English translation of that book.

Assessment Questions

1. Do you think Het'um offers a coherent description of China and its people, or does he just provide details at random with no central organizing idea at all? Cite details in the text to support your answer.
2. Does Het'um's view of the Chinese mainly reflect his imperfect knowledge about them, or does it mainly reflect cultural biases that distort his understanding of them? Cite details in the text to support your answer.

Assessment 4 *Basic Level*

Confucius on Filial Piety

★ *Craft and Structure*

4. (6–8) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should see that Confucius does adopt a negative way of framing his answers. That is, he mostly tells the students what filial piety is not. Nevertheless, he does include the word “respect” and the phrase “proper countenance” to indicate positively what must accompany mere actions to help parents. Empty action alone, without deeply felt respect, is not filial piety. Best answers might note that the negative way of approaching the definition forces the readers to supply their own interpretations to complete the meaning. Answers to the second assessment question will vary, given how much is left up to each reader to infer. The third passage connects the issue of filial piety in families to relationships between rulers and the people they rule. A good son will develop the character needed to help maintain good order and social harmony in society at large. All of this is entailed in the concept of filial piety.

Confucius on Filial Piety

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

A Primary Source Document

Ziyou asked about filial conduct. The Master replied, “Those today who are filial are considered so because they are able to provide for their parents. But even dogs and horses are given that much care. If we do not respect our parents, what is the difference?”

Zixia asked about filial conduct. The Master replied, “It all lies in showing the proper countenance. As for the young contributing their energies when there is work to be done, and deferring to their elders when there is wine and food to be had—how can merely doing this be considered being filial?”

Yu Tzu [another student of Confucius] said, “It is rare for a man whose character is such that he is good as a son and obedient as a young man to have the inclination to transgress against his superiors; it is unheard of for one who has no such inclination to be inclined to start a rebellion. The gentleman devotes his efforts to the roots, for once the roots are established, the Way will grow therefrom. Being good as a son and obedient as a young man is, perhaps, the root of a man’s character.”

Source Information: Confucius lived in the fifth century BCE. However, he has been a central influence in China for much of its history, especially in the Tang and Song eras. Confucius stressed five traditional relationships as central for social well-being and morality: father/son; ruler/minister; husband/wife; older brother/younger brother; friend/friend. For Confucius, what makes these relationships sound, above all, is *xiao*, a term often translated as “filial piety.” In the *Analects*, Confucius answers questions his students ask. This document comprises three passages from the *Analects* on filial piety. The first two are available from *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* by Robert Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), pp. 77–78, reprinted with permission. The third is quoted on andrewhong.net, a website run by Chinese minister and writer Andrew Hong.

Assessment Questions

1. In the first two of these passages, Confucius seems to dwell more on what filial piety is not, rather than what it is. What point do you think he is making in these two answers to his students?
2. Use all three of these passages from the *Analects* to come up with your own explanation of what filial piety is and why it is so important to Confucius. In answering, be sure to relate the third passage to the first two.

Assessment 4 *Advanced Level*

Confucius on Filial Piety

★ *Craft and Structure*

4. (9–10) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
4. (11–12) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 4 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should see that in the first two passages, Confucius mainly explains what filial piety is not. Nevertheless, he includes the word “respect” and the phrase “proper countenance” to indicate that mere action to help parents is not enough. Action alone, without deeply felt respect, is not filial piety. Best answers might note that this negative way of approaching the definition forces readers to supply their own interpretations to complete the meaning. The third passage connects concerns about filial piety in the family to relationships between rulers and the people they rule. A good son will develop the character needed to maintain good order and social harmony in the society at large. This harmony depends, in other words, on filial piety. Answers to the second assessment question will vary. Some could feel that the emphasis in these passages is all on what an obedient subordinate figure must do to show respect (the son, the citizen in relation to a ruler, etc.). Others may feel it is clearly implied in these passages that respect must be mutual. Just as a father loves a son, so a ruler or other superior must win the respect of subordinates by virtue of his own high moral character and just actions.

Confucius on Filial Piety

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 4: (9–10) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. **(11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

A Primary Source Document

Ziyou asked about filial conduct. The Master replied, “Those today who are filial are considered so because they are able to provide for their parents. But even dogs and horses are given that much care. If we do not respect our parents, what is the difference?”

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Yu Tzu [Another student of Confucius] said, “It is rare for a man whose character is such that he is good as a son and obedient as a young man to have the inclination to transgress against his superiors; it is unheard of for one who has no such inclination to be inclined to start a rebellion. The gentleman devotes his efforts to the roots, for once the roots are established, the Way will grow therefrom. Being good as a son and obedient as a young man is, perhaps, the root of a man’s character.”

Source Information: Confucius lived in the fifth century BCE. However, he has been a central influence in China for much of its history, especially in the Tang and Song eras. Confucius stressed five traditional relationships as central for social well-being and morality: father/son; ruler/minister; husband/wife; older brother/younger brother; friend/friend. For Confucius, what makes these relationships sound, above all, is *xiao*, a term often translated as “filial piety.” In the *Analects*, Confucius answers questions his students ask. This document comprises three passages from the *Analects* on filial piety. The first two are available from *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* by Robert Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), pp. 77–78, reprinted with permission. The third is quoted on andrewhong.net, a website run by Chinese minister and writer Andrew Hong.

Assessment Questions

1. Using all three of these passages, explain what Confucius means by filial piety and why it is so important for ensuring a humane social order.
2. Confucius sees social harmony as dependent on individual character and on the proper functioning of five traditional relationships. However, one critic says, "Confucius doesn't foster true social harmony. He fosters conformity and blind obedience." Do you agree? Why or why not?

Assessment 5 *Basic Level*

Rice Technology and Population Growth

★ *Craft and Structure*

5. (6–8) Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as to its various stylistic features. These formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the assessment question should identify the passage's basic generalization as the claim that advances in rice technology were the major reason China's population shot up during the Song era, especially in the south. This generalization is asserted in the second paragraph, just after questions about it are posed. Then many specific details about rice production and distribution follow in support of this generalization. For this reason, the "deductive structure" fits this passage best. Answers should note such details as the fertility of soil along the Yangtze; the new early ripening rice strains and the ability to raise two rice crops a year in the south; rice's high calorie content and yield per acre, making it a good food to support a growing population; the large amount of labor needed, which also encouraged population growth; etc.

Rice Technology and Population Growth

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer one question about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

CCS Standard 5: Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

Document 1: A Secondary Source

During the Song dynasty, China's population grew rapidly, especially in the south. By one estimate, China in 742 CE had about 50 million people. By 1100 CE, this number had doubled to 100 million. Why? And why did the southern part of China grow especially rapidly?

Many technological innovations enabled China to prosper in these centuries. Iron and steel production soared. Shipbuilding techniques led the world. Gunpowder and other weapons strengthened China's armies. However, it was advances in rice technology above all that explain the rise in population, especially in the south.

A new kind of rice was brought to China from what is now Vietnam early in the Song dynasty. It was an early ripening, more drought-resistant rice than the kinds China was familiar with. This often made it possible to grow two crops a year, or sometimes even three. Improved irrigation control methods also helped increase agricultural output per acre.

Millet, wheat, and sorghum were the basic food crops in the north. Rice was the main crop in the south. Much of its production took place in the fertile lands along the lower Yangtze River. The warmer weather and plentiful rainfall there often made it easy to plant and harvest two crops per year of the new rice strains.

Wet-rice farming is very labor-intensive—that is, it takes a great deal of labor compared to other crops. Paddy fields must be constructed. They must be irrigated to keep them wet and at an even temperature. Dams, reservoirs, and irrigation ditches must be constructed. Fields on hilly lands must be terraced. Seedlings must be raised in nurseries and later transplanted to the paddies. Weeding takes time. As does threshing and husking at harvest time.

The large labor force was supplied by the many northerners who moved south during the Song dynasty. The payoff was that rice is a highly efficient food, providing more calories per acre than other crops. So as the Song-era population grew, the food supply did also. The many streams and rivers in the region, plus China's Grand Canal and other water routes, made it easier for southern China to supply all of China and become the center of China's economic and population growth in these centuries.

Source Information: This document is a secondary source about the growth of population during the Tang and Song dynasties in China. This particular secondary source historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Assessment Question

“Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are two types of text structure:

- *Deductive Structure:* A generalization is presented and defined. Then specific examples or details follow that explain or support the generalization.
- *Inductive Structure:* A series of illustrations or examples are first presented and readers are then led to make a generalization from the examples.

Explain which of these text structures best fits this document and why. In your answer, identify the basic generalization made in the passage and some of the details supporting that generalization.

Assessment 5 *Advanced Level*

Rice Technology and Population Growth

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 5. (9–10)** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
- 5. (11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 5 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, chapters, as well as to its various stylistic features. Students should see how structure is deliberately used to enable the text to achieve certain goals. Such formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question may vary as to which text structure is favored. All acceptable responses should see that the passage does conform to both text structures to some extent. The passage offers a basic generalization in paragraph two in its claim that advances in rice technology are the major reason China's population shot up during the Song dynasty, especially in the south. Many specific details about rice production and distribution follow in support of this generalization. That means the "deductive structure" fits this passage. But so also does the "cause and effect" structure, since the key generalization is specifically about the causes of an effect or outcome (improved rice technology causing a population increase). Answers to the second assessment question may vary but should show some understanding of what sorts of factors might realistically have contributed to population growth. These could include a long era of peace and social unity, shifting family formation practices and fertility rates, improvements in transportation and their impact on economic well-being, technological advances in other areas such as shipbuilding and resulting greater trading opportunities, etc.

Rice Technology and Population Growth

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below it. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 5: (9–10) Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis. **(11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

Document 1: A Secondary Source

During the Song dynasty, China's population grew rapidly, especially in the south. By one estimate, China in 742 CE had about 50 million people. By 1100 CE, this number had doubled to 100 million. Why? And why did the southern part of China grow especially rapidly?

Many technological innovations enabled China to prosper in these centuries. Iron and steel production soared. Shipbuilding techniques led the world. Gunpowder and other weapons strengthened China's armies. However, it was advances in rice technology above all that explain the rise in population, especially in the south.

A new kind of rice was brought to China from what is now Vietnam early in the Song dynasty. It was an early ripening, more drought-resistant rice than the kinds China was familiar with. This often made it possible to grow two crops a year, or sometimes even three. Improved irrigation control methods also helped increase agricultural output per acre.

Millet, wheat, and sorghum were the basic food crops in the north. Rice was the main crop in the south. Much of its production took place in the fertile lands along the lower Yangtze River. The warmer weather and plentiful rainfall there often made it easy to plant and harvest two crops per year of the new rice strains.

Wet-rice farming is very labor-intensive—that is, it takes a great deal of labor compared to other crops. Paddy fields must be constructed. They must be irrigated to keep them wet and at an even temperature. Dams, reservoirs and irrigation ditches must be constructed. Fields on hilly lands must be terraced. Seedlings must be raised in nurseries and later transplanted to the paddies. Weeding takes time. As does threshing and husking at harvest time.

The large labor force was supplied by the many northerners who moved south during the Song dynasty. The payoff was that rice is a highly efficient food, providing more calories per acre than other crops. So as the Song-dynasty population grew, the food supply did also. The many streams and rivers in the region, plus China's Grand Canal and other water routes, made it easier for southern China to supply all of China and become the center of China's economic and population growth in these centuries.

Source Information: This document is a secondary source about the growth of population during the Tang and Song dynasties in China. This particular secondary source historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Assessment Questions

1. “Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. Here are two types of text structure:

- *Deductive Structure:* A generalization is presented and defined. Then specific examples or details follow that explain or support the generalization.
- *Cause and Effect:* A pattern that shows what factors caused an effect or set of effects.

Both text structures could fit this document to some degree. Choose the one you think fits best. Explain your choice, but also explain why the other one also fits the document somewhat.

2. What other factors not mentioned in this document might also have helped cause the rise in China’s population during the Song dynasty? List one or two and explain your choices.

Assessment 6 *Basic Level*

Peasant Life

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (6–8)** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8. It asks students to note a text’s point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author’s background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should note such features of the poem as its many vivid and joyful images—a cock crowing, children shouting, hoes glistening in sunlight, food available for meals, laughter on the road, and the personal touch of the poet giving a girl a flower for her hair. These all help convey a sense of the colorfulness of this moment. The poem also depicts the entire village gladly working together. The impression is strong that this is a collective effort done co-operatively by all the peasants. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note that each of the two parts of the poem ends with a line showing how badly some peasants are suffering in spite of all the grain they produce and make available. The focus here is not on one village. It is on the entire nation of peasants and the very hard labor they do. It focuses also on the unfair distribution of the grain, so that some have a full plate, while “the peasants starve.”

Peasant Life

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Document 1: A Primary Source

At cock crow the whole village rouses,
Gets ready to set off for the middle fields:
Remind the wife to be sure to fix some millet,
Shout to the children to shut the gate behind us.
Spade and hoe catch the morning light;
Laughter and hubbub mingle on the road.
Puddles from the night before wet our straw sandals;
Here's wild flower to stick in the bun of your hair!

Source Information: Qin Guan (1049–c. 1100 CE) was a northern Song poet who wrote several poems about life in his village. This is a short excerpt from one of those poems. The entire poem can be found in Kojiro Yoshikawa's *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, translated by Burton Watson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 16–17.

Document 2: A Primary Source

1. All the nations plant a grain of millet in Spring
Collect thousands of seeds in Autumn
No field is idle across the land
Yet the peasants still starve.
2. Hoeing the grain throughout the day
Sweat beads and grain fall to earth
Who could know that on a full plate
Each grain demands such bitter toil.

Source Information: Li Shen (772–846 CE) was a Tang-era poet, teacher, and government official. This two-part poem, called “Peasant’s Lament,” is one of his most famous. This version of the poem is adapted from several translations.

1. This statement is about Document 1: “The style of this poem captures in a delightful way the cooperative and colorful life of China’s peasants.” Choose three lines in the poem that best support this statement and explain your choices.

2. How does Li Shen's poem (Document 2) challenge or undercut the point of view Qin Guan expresses in Document 1?

Assessment 6 *Advanced Level*

Peasant Life

★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (9–10) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 6. (11–12) Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to note a text's point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author's background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should note the phrases in Qin Guan's poem that help convey a vivid and joyful image of Chinese village life—a cock crowing, children shouting, hoes glistening in sunlight, food available for meals, laughter on the road, and the personal touch of a flower given to a girl for her hair. The poem also makes it clear that it is the village together that is going off to work. The impression is strong that it is a collective effort done cooperatively by all the peasants. Yet the individual is also in focus, with the poet placing himself in the poem as the one giving the girl the flower. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. They should see that Li Shen's poem is terse and far less colorful. Each part repeats a somewhat grim pattern of three lines about how productive the peasants are, and one line stressing their terrible suffering. The focus here is not on one village. It is broader and more abstract, dealing with the entire nation of peasants, the hard labor they do, and the unfair distribution of the grain they produce.

Peasant Life

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 6: (9–10) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

(11–12) Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

Document 1: A Primary Source

At cock crow the whole village rouses,
Gets ready to set off for the middle fields:
Remind the wife to be sure to fix some millet,
Shout to the children to shut the gate behind us.
Spade and hoe catch the morning light;
Laughter and hubbub mingle on the road.
Puddles from the night before wet our straw sandals;
Here's wild flower to stick in the bun of your hair!

Source Information: Qin Guan (1049–c. 1100 CE) was a northern Song poet who wrote several poems about life in his village. This is a short excerpt from one of those poems. The entire poem can be found in Kojiro Yoshikawa's *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, translated by Burton Watson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 16–17.

Document 2: A Primary Source

1. All the nations plant a grain of millet in Spring
Collect thousands of seeds in Autumn
No field is idle across the land
Yet the peasants still starve.

2. Hoeing the grain throughout the day
Sweat beads and grain fall to earth
Who could know that on a full plate
Each grain demands such bitter toil.

Source Information: Li Shen (772–846 CE) was a Tang-era poet, teacher, and government official. This two-part poem, called “Peasant’s Lament,” is one of his most famous. This version of the poem is adapted from several translations.

Assessment 7 *Basic Level*

Technological Advances

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (6–8)** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in several primary sources presented in a variety of visual and textual formats.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

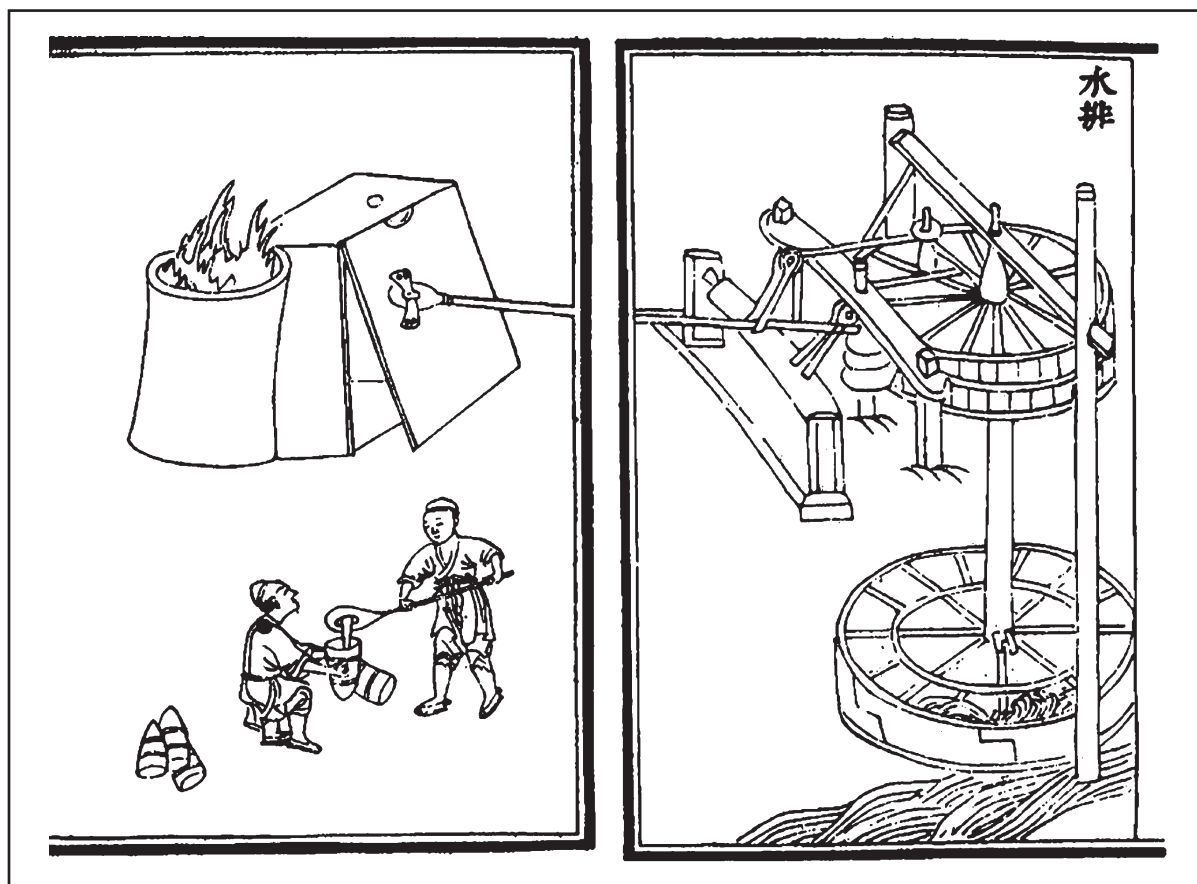
Acceptable answers to the assessment question should see how all three documents represent major technological achievements—a water wheel and bellows in Document 1, a huge canal or system of canals shown on the map in Document 2, and the compass referred to in Document 3. The documents also indicate the practical uses to which these forms of technology were put. The water wheel and bellows are shown being used to produce large quantities of molten iron for many practical uses. The map in Document 2 makes it clear how China's know-how in canal building could connect major trading regions throughout all of China. Document 3 indicates how useful the compass, the “south-pointing needle,” was as an aid to making ship navigation far more effective and safe.

Technological Advances

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer one question focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

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

Document 1: A Primary Source



By Wang Zhen (Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Source Information: This print depicts a waterwheel powering the bellows of a blast furnace for creating cast iron. The illustration is from a 14th-century treatise by Wang Zhen.

Document 2: A Primary Source



Data from China Absolute Tours, Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal

Source Information: The Grand Canal is actually the network of canals shown here. These canals were built at various times and in stages, but the main sections were linked during the Sui dynasty (581–618 CE). In those years, millions were put to work connecting Hangzhou, south of the Yangtze River, to Luoyang and to Beijing in the north. At about 1,100 miles, the Grand Canal is the longest canal in the world.

Document 3: A Primary Source

To the east (of Hainan Island) are the ‘Thousand-Li Sand Banks’ and the ‘Myriad-Li rocks’, and (beyond them) is the boundless ocean, where the sea and sky blend their colours, and the passing ships sail only by means of the south-pointing needle. This has to be watched closely by day and night, for life or death depend on the slightest fraction of error.

Source Information: This is a brief passage on the compass, a Chinese invention. The passage is from the *Zhu Fan Shi* (Records of Foreign People) of 1225, written by geographer Chao Ju-Kuan. It is quoted in Joseph Needham’s *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 3 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 30–32.

Assessment Question

Consider this statement: “From very early on, China was not only highly creative in developing new technology, but it was also able to use its technology in many practical ways.” How do *all three* of these documents together support this statement?

Assessment 7 *Advanced Level*

Technological Advances

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

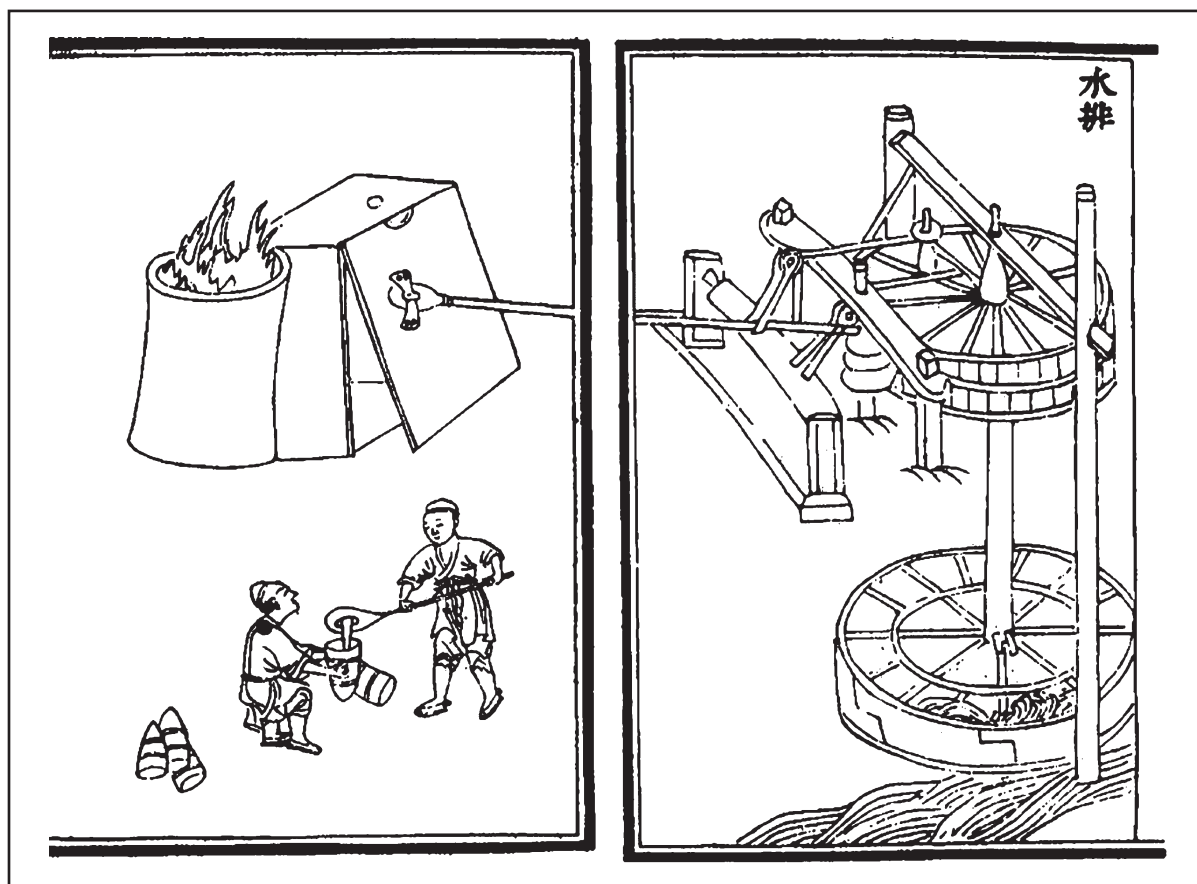
Acceptable answers to the assessment question should first formulate a coherent thesis statement or claim that addresses a topic common to all three documents. Best answers will defend a claim about the practical impact of technological innovation in China by referring to the following details in all of the documents: In Document 1, the water wheel and bellows are shown in operation, making possible the production of large quantities of molten iron for many uses. The huge canal or system of canals in Document 2 clearly connected the major trading regions throughout all of China. The description of the compass referred to in Document 3 shows how crucial an aid it was in making ship navigating far more effective and safe.

Technological Advances

Directions: This exercise asks you to study four documents carefully and answer one question focused on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

CCS Standard 7: (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

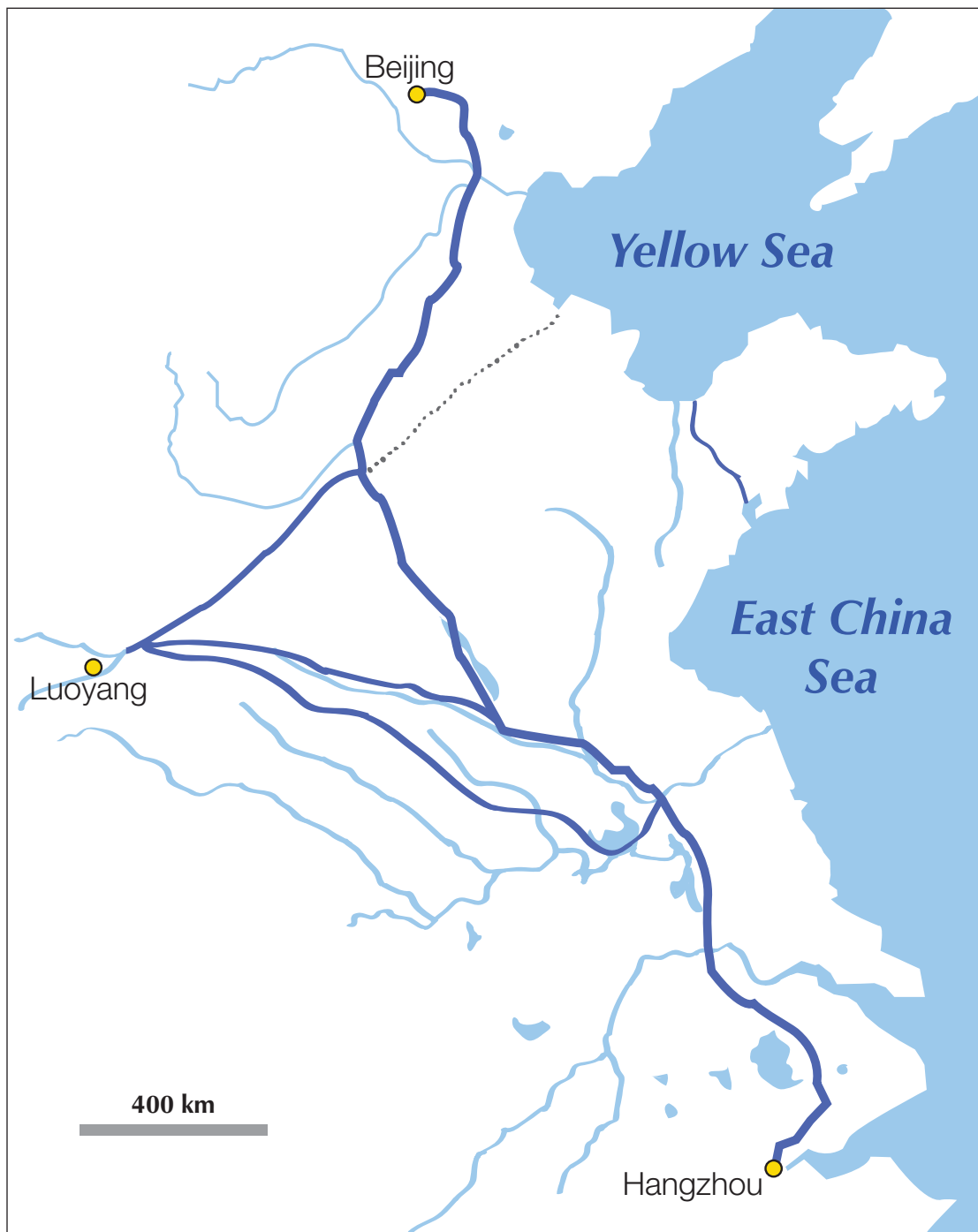
Document 1: A Primary Source



By Wang Zhen (Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Source Information: This print depicts a waterwheel powering the bellows of a blast furnace for creating cast iron. The illustration is from a 14th-century treatise by Wang Zhen.

Document 2: A Primary Source



Data from China Absolute Tours, Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal

Source Information: The Grand Canal is actually the network of canals shown here. These canals were built at various times and in stages, but the main sections were linked during the Sui dynasty (581–618 CE). In those years, millions were put to work connecting Hangzhou, south of the Yangtze River, to Luoyang and to Beijing in the north. At about 1,100 miles, the Grand Canal is the longest canal in the world.

Document 3: A Primary Source

To the east (of Hainan Island) are the ‘Thousand-Li Sand Banks’ and the ‘Myriad-Li rocks’, and (beyond them) is the boundless ocean, where the sea and sky blend their colours, and the passing ships sail only by means of the south-pointing needle. This has to be watched closely by day and night, for life or death depend on the slightest fraction of error.

Source Information: This is a brief passage on the compass, a Chinese invention. The passage is from the *Zhu Fan Shi* (Records of Foreign People) of 1225, written by geographer Chao Ju-Kuan. It is quoted in Joseph Needham’s *The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 3 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 30–32.

Assessment Question

Using all of these documents, formulate a claim or thesis about China’s science and technology. Write a brief defense of your claim referring specifically and substantively to *all three* of these documents as your evidence.

Assessment 8 *Basic Level***Buddhism**★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 8. (6–8)** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text reasons about its factual claims and to distinguish between these and expressions of opinion. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered or to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim—as well as being able to distinguish these from the text's biases or expressions of opinion. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should identify two key complaints about Buddhism: first, its supposedly harmful effect on people's attitudes and beliefs; second, its harmful impact on the economy. As to the first, the proclamation suggests Buddhism disrupts the family ("neglecting both husband and wife"); because of it, "manners and customs became flippant and insincere." The second complaint is the one most emphasized, that Buddhism detracts from the nation's wealth and harms the economy. The proclamation speaks of Buddhism as "wasting human labor in building, plundering the people's purse by golden decorations." It claims that Buddhism diverts too many people away from productive activity and too much tax money into unproductive monasteries that pay no taxes. The proclamation's main goal seems to be to justify closing thousands of monasteries and temples and forcing hundreds of thousands of nuns and monks back into doing work for which they can then be taxed. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. Some may be convinced that the simple existence of the tax-exempt Buddhist monasteries and temples proves they are a burden. Others may note that no evidence is offered to show that this is actually the case. There is no discussion, for example, as to what these institutions may or may not be doing to support themselves, nor is much evidence provided to show that they are undermining good order or Chinese culture in any specific way.

Buddhism

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

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

A Primary Source Document

After the dynasties of Han and Wei, Buddhism gradually began to flourish. And once established, in that degenerate age, this strange custom prevailed far and wide, and now the people are soaked to the bone with it. Just now the national spirit begins to be spoiled unconsciously by it; and, leading the heart of the people astray, it has put the public in worse condition than ever. In the country—throughout the nine Provinces and among the mountains and fields as well as in both the capitals—the number of priests is daily increasing and the Buddhist temples are constantly winning support.

Wasting human labor in building, plundering the people's purse by golden decorations, neglecting both husband and wife by their vigil-keeping, no teaching is more harmful than this Buddhism. In breaking the laws of the country and injuring the people, none can surpass this Buddhism. If a farmer neglects his field, many suffer the pangs of starvation from his negligence. If a woman neglects her silk-worm culture, many suffer the calamity of being frozen to death through her negligence. Now there are at present so many monks and nuns that to count them is almost impossible. They all depend on farming for their food and upon silk-worms for their clothing!

The public monasteries and temples, as well as private chapels and shrines, are innumerable; and all of them so gigantic and imposing that they vie with the Imperial Palace in splendor! In Dynasties of the past 250 years, the resources of this Empire were exhausted and the country gradually declined, whilst its manners and customs became flippant and insincere, solely because of this Buddhism.

After closely examining the examples set by our Imperial predecessors, We have finally decided to put an end to such conspicuous evils. . . . Those 4,600 monasteries supported by the Government shall be confiscated and, at the same time, 260,500 nuns and priests shall return to the secular life so that they may be able to pay the taxes. We shall also confiscate 40,000 private temples with the fertile and good lands amounting to several tens of millions of acres; and emancipate 150,000 slaves and make them into free, tax-paying people.

Source Information: Buddhism entered China from India and flourished in the chaotic centuries after the collapse of the Han dynasty in 220 CE. During the Tang dynasty (618–906 CE), it continued to spread. Its thousands of monasteries did not have to pay taxes. In 842, in the midst of a financial crisis, the Emperor Wuzong began a campaign of persecution against Buddhism, as well as other foreign religions. This campaign did real harm to Buddhist institutions. However, Buddhism remained popular in China for centuries

to come. In 845, Emperor Wuzong issued his “Proclamation Ordering the Destruction of the Buddhist Monasteries.” This excerpt from it has been shortened and slightly adapted for use here.

Assessment Questions

1. What is Emperor Wuzong’s main complaint about Buddhism? That is, what is the main harm he sees it doing to society? Cite details from the text to support your answer.
2. At one point, the proclamation says Buddhism “has put the public in worse condition than ever.” Do you think the proclamation supports this claim with convincing evidence? Why or why not?

Assessment 8 *Advanced Level*

Buddhism

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 8. (9–10)** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
- 8. (11–12)** Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should identify two key complaints about Buddhism. First, the proclamation suggests Buddhism disrupts the family ("neglecting both husband and wife") and harms the culture in general, causing "manners and customs" to become "flippant and insincere." No real evidence for this assertion is offered. The proclamation's most emphasized complaint is that Buddhism harms the economy by diverting too many people from productive activity and tax revenues into unproductive monasteries that pay no taxes. Evidence of a sort is provided in the form of estimated numbers of monasteries, temples, and nuns and monks. But no evidence is provided showing how much wealth these institutions divert and whether or not they engage in activities to support themselves. Answers to the second assessment question will be speculative and may vary. Perhaps the monks and nuns would defend the overall social and cultural value of their teachings. Perhaps they would point to the good works they do for the rest of society. Or perhaps they would defend their quest for a more contemplative and spiritual life as a supreme good in and of itself. There is plenty of room for debate here.

Buddhism

Directions: This exercise asks you to read one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 8: (9–10) Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims. **(11–12)** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

A Primary Source Document

After the dynasties of Han and Wei, Buddhism gradually began to flourish. And once established, in that degenerate- age, this strange custom prevailed far and wide, and now the people are soaked to the bone with it. Just now the national spirit begins to be spoiled unconsciously by it; and, leading the heart of the people astray, it has put the public in worse condition than ever. In the country—throughout the nine Provinces and among the mountains and fields as well as in both the capitals—the number of priests is daily increasing and the Buddhist temples are constantly winning support.

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Wuzong began a campaign of persecution against Buddhism, as well as other foreign religions. This campaign did real harm to Buddhist institutions. However, Buddhism remained popular in China for centuries to come. In 845, Emperor Wuzong issued his “Proclamation Ordering the Destruction of the Buddhist Monasteries.” This excerpt from it has been shortened and slightly adapted for use here.

Assessment Questions

1. What is Emperor Wuzong’s main complaint about Buddhism, and what evidence does he offer to support that claim?
2. How might the Buddhist monks and nuns in China have challenged the claims this proclamation makes against them?

Assessment 9 *Basic Level*

Attitudes toward Science

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

9. (6–8) Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note that, in Fu Zuan's account, Mr. Ma was a minor official whose views were dismissed as worthless by the top officials he talks to. In the first paragraph of Document 1, it is not clear why the top officials are so skeptical. The second paragraph clarifies their attitude. It describes court scholar Master Phei as looking down on Mr. Ma's lack of verbal skill and eloquence. Fu Zuan tells Master Phei, "Your great merit is of course eloquence, but where you fall short is technical skill." This backs up Mr. Ma, who says, "Empty arguments with words cannot compare with a test which will show practical results." Basically, Fu Zuan suggests the officials are not technically educated and value only purely verbal and literary skills, not scientific or technical knowledge. Answers to the second assessment question should see that the attitude of the officials in Document 1 reflects a much broader pattern of an entire ruling group of scholar-bureaucrats. According to Document 2, they are men educated in Confucian classics who lack training in technological matters and have little interest in them.

Attitudes toward Science

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. One document is a primary source and the other is a secondary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Document 1: A Primary Source

Mr. Ma, being a Policy Review Adviser one day fell into a dispute at court with the Permanent Counselor Gaotang Long and the Cavalry General Qin Lang about the south-pointing carriage. They maintained there had never been any such thing and that the records of it were nonsense. Mr. Ma said: "Of old there was. You have not thought the matter out. It is really not far from the truth." But they laughed. . . . To this Mr. Ma replied: "Empty arguments with words cannot compare with a test which will show practical results." All this was reported to the emperor Ming Di, whereupon Ma Jun received an order to construct such a vehicle. And he duly made a south-pointing carriage. This was the first of his extraordinary accomplishments. . . . But again it was almost impossible to describe in words. However, henceforth the world bowed to his technical skill.

. . . There was at court a notable scholar, Master Phei. When he heard of Ma's inventions, he laughed, and mocked him with difficult questions. Mr. Ma stammered and could not give satisfactory replies. As Master Phei could not get the essential ideas from Ma's explanations, he continued to discredit him. I myself said to Master Phei on one occasion: "Your great merit is of course eloquence, but where you fall short is technical skill. Now this is Mr. Ma's strong point, but he is not a good talker. For you to attack his inability to express himself is really not fair. On the other hand when you argue with him about those technicalities in which he excels, there must be points which we cannot expect to understand. His special talent is a very rare one in the world. For Mr. Ma's gifts are all of the mind and not of the tongue."

Source Information: Ma Jun was a minor official at the Chinese emperor's court in the third century CE. He was an excellent engineer. In this passage, Ma Jun's friend, philosopher and poet Fu Zuan, defends him against the criticisms of some higher officials. The passage offers some insight into attitudes toward science among the top imperial officials. (The "south-pointing carriage" mentioned in the document was a two-wheeled vehicle with a movable pointer that always pointed south, even as the carriage moved and turned.) This passage is quoted in Joseph Needham's *Physics and Physical Technology, Part 2, Mechanical Engineering*, vol. 4 of *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 40.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

In woodblock printing, an entire page was carved in reverse on a wooden surface which was inked and pressed against sheets of paper. Movable and reusable type appeared by 1100. However, written Chinese uses thousands of individual characters, rather than just a few letters. This may have limited the usefulness of movable type and the spread of literacy.

Could this be one factor explaining why China did not lead the world into the industrial age or the Scientific Revolution, despite its many technological triumphs? Aside from limits to the spread of literacy, another factor may have been China's powerful centralized state and its ruling scholar-bureaucrats. These officials were educated in Confucian classic literature. They had little training in technological matters and little interest in scientific studies. Middle-class merchants and other professionals might have had more interest in science and technology, but their political and social influence was much less than their counterparts' was to become in the West. Few independent universities or other institutions existed to encourage and protect scholars interested in pursuing scientific fields of knowledge.

The great historian of Chinese science and technology is Joseph Needham. He revealed how innovative China was in dozens of technological fields. Yet even he has asked, "If the Chinese were so advanced in antiquity and the Middle Ages, how was it that the Scientific Revolution, the coming of modern science into the world happened only in Europe?"

Source Information: This passage is a secondary source on technological innovation in China and the attitudes of China's scholar officials. It helps illustrate certain views among China's educated officials toward science, engineers, merchants, and artisans. The passage is adapted from the "Introductory Essay" in Jonathan Burack's *The Technological Triumphs of Tang and Song China* in the Historian's Apprentice series (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2010).

Assessment Questions

1. In Document 1, why does Fu Zuan think the top imperial officials look down on Mr. Ma and dismiss his ideas with such contempt?
2. The story told in Document 1 illustrates what some historians say was a larger problem for China. How does Document 2 help clarify what that larger problem was?

Assessment 9 *Advanced Level*

Attitudes toward Science

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 9. (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 9. (11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note that, in Fu Zuan's account, Mr. Ma was a minor official whose views were dismissed as worthless by the top officials he talks to. In the document, the court officials look down on Mr. Ma's lack of verbal skill and eloquence. Fu Zuan tells Master Phei, "Your great merit is of course eloquence, but where you fall short is technical skill." This backs up Mr. Ma, who says, "Empty arguments with words cannot compare with a test which will show practical results." Basically, Fu Zuan suggests the officials are not technically educated and value only purely verbal and literary skills, not scientific or technical knowledge. Document 2 suggests that this attitude reflects a much broader pattern of an entire ruling group of scholar-bureaucrats. They are men educated in Confucian classics who lack training in technological matters and have little interest in them. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. Mr. Ma clearly is committed to testing his ideas and seeking to achieve practical results from them. Some may feel this proves that he fully accepts a scientific approach to knowledge. Others may not be so sure. They may distinguish between a knack for gaining technical know-how and a drive for theoretical scientific understanding. Joseph Needham seems to be making this distinction in the question he asks at the end of Document 2.

Attitudes toward Science

Directions: This exercise asks you to read two documents carefully and answer two questions about specific details in them. One document is a primary source and the other is a secondary source. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 9: (9–10) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. **(11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Document 1: A Primary Source

Mr. Ma, being a Policy Review Adviser one day fell into a dispute at court with the Permanent Counselor Gaotang Long and the Cavalry General Qin Lang about the south-pointing carriage. They maintained there had never been any such thing and that the records of it were nonsense. Mr. Ma said: "Of old there was. You have not thought the matter out. It is really not far from the truth." But they laughed. . . . To this Mr. Ma replied: "Empty arguments with words cannot compare with a test which will show practical results." All this was reported to the emperor Ming Di, whereupon Ma Jun received an order to construct such a vehicle. And he duly made a south-pointing carriage. This was the first of his extraordinary accomplishments. . . . But again it was almost impossible to describe in words. However, henceforth the world bowed to his technical skill.

. . . There was at court a notable scholar, Master Phei. When he heard of Ma's inventions, he laughed, and mocked him with difficult questions. Mr. Ma stammered and could not give satisfactory replies. As Master Phei could not get the essential ideas from Ma's explanations, he continued to discredit him. I myself said to Master Phei on one occasion: "Your great merit is of course eloquence, but where you fall short is technical skill. Now this is Mr. Ma's strong point, but he is not a good talker. For you to attack his inability to express himself is really not fair. On the other hand when you argue with him about those technicalities in which he excels, there must be points which we cannot expect to understand. His special talent is a very rare one in the world. For Mr. Ma's gifts are all of the mind and not of the tongue."

Source Information: Ma Jun was a minor official at the Chinese emperor's court in the third century CE. He was an excellent engineer. In this passage, Ma Jun's friend, philosopher and poet Fu Zuan, defends him against the criticisms of some higher officials. The passage offers some insight into attitudes toward science among the top imperial officials. (The "south-pointing carriage" mentioned in the document was a two-wheeled vehicle with a movable pointer that always pointed south, even as the carriage moved and turned.) This passage is quoted in Joseph Needham's *Physics and Physical Technology, Part 2, Mechanical Engineering*, vol. 4 of *Science and Civilisation in China* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 40.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

In woodblock printing, an entire page was carved in reverse on a wooden surface which was inked and pressed against sheets of paper. Movable and reusable type appeared by 1100. However, written Chinese uses thousands of individual characters, rather than just a few letters. This may have limited the usefulness of movable type and the spread of literacy.

Could this be one factor explaining why China did not lead the world into the industrial age or the Scientific Revolution, despite its many technological triumphs? Aside from limits to the spread of literacy, another factor may have been China's powerful centralized state and its ruling scholar-bureaucrats. These officials were educated in Confucian classic literature. They had little training in technological matters and little interest in scientific studies. Middle-class merchants and other professionals might have had more interest in science and technology, but their political and social influence was much less than their counterparts' was to become in the West. Few independent universities or other institutions existed to encourage and protect scholars interested in pursuing scientific fields of knowledge.

The great historian of Chinese science and technology is Joseph Needham. He revealed how innovative China was in dozens of technological fields. Yet even he has asked, "If the Chinese were so advanced in antiquity and the Middle Ages, how was it that the Scientific Revolution, the coming of modern science into the world happened only in Europe?"

Source Information: This passage is a secondary source on technological innovation in China and the attitudes of China's scholar officials. It helps illustrate certain views among China's educated officials toward science, engineers, merchants, and artisans. The passage is adapted from the "Introductory Essay" for in Jonathan Burack's *The Technological Triumphs of Tang and Song China* in the Historian's Apprentice series (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2010).

Assessment Questions

1. The clash of views described in Document 1 may reveal a broader ongoing problem in China's history. What was that clash of views, and how does Document 2 show it as a broader issue in Chinese intellectual history?
2. From the story as it is told in Document 1, do you think Mr. Ma has a modern, scientific view of the world? Why or why not?

Writing Assessment 1

Medieval China

★ The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 1 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

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Writing Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 1. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that makes meaningful claims and that develops those claims using relevant evidence and sound reasoning. The essay should make clear the strengths and limitations of the claims it makes while also considering possible challenges or counter claims.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assignment 1

Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.

- How well does the essay state a claim addressing all elements of the prompt?
- Does the essay use evidence from all or most of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence explained effectively using careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Does the essay defend the claim in relation to any relevant alternative claims?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its claims?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Medieval China

The Standard: Write a brief essay that presents a well-reasoned argument focused on historical content.

The Question

Using your background history knowledge and the primary source documents listed here, explain why you do or do not agree with the following statement:

"Medieval China's great achievements were due mainly to the unifying power of its imperial system and the creative leadership of its educated "scholar officials."

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *Medieval China* Assessments.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce a specific claim that you can defend in response to the question.
- Support your claim with an argument based on evidence from the documents and sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Consider other possible claims that may differ from your own.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect all parts of your essay to the claim you are making.
- Write a conclusion that follows from the argument your essay has made.

Writing Assessment 2

Medieval China

★ The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 2 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

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Writing Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 2. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that uses sources effectively to provide strong support and evidence clarifying and explaining a central idea or set of ideas and concepts.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assignment 2

Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.

- How well does the introduction address the prompt with a clear, well-defined central idea and a preview of supporting ideas?
- Does the essay use evidence from many of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence used effectively to support the essay's key ideas and concepts?
- Does the essay engage in careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its key ideas?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

Medieval China

The Standard: Write an informative/explanatory essay clearly describing and explaining historical events and trends.

The Question

A local museum has asked you to help them prepare a brochure on medieval China. The brochure for the public will introduce a display showcasing China's achievements and the key challenges or problems it faced during the Tang and Song dynasties. The brochure will include four primary sources. Your task in this assignment is to choose from among the sources for these assessments the *four* that you think best illustrate either medieval China's achievements or the big challenges it faced. Write an essay analyzing your choices in detail and explaining why they are representative of the "achievements" and the "challenges" of medieval China.

Documents: Base your essay on your general background knowledge and on your selection of sources from all the primary source documents in *Medieval China* Assessments.

Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce the topic with a clear, well-defined central idea, and preview in a general way other key ideas your essay will develop.
- Support each of your key ideas with evidence from many of the documents and with sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect the major parts of your essay.
- Write a conclusion that follows from and summarizes the main points your essay has made.

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