STANDARD WHI.4e, f Ancient China

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the civilizations of Persia, India, and China in terms of chronology, geography, social structures, government, economy, religion, and contributions to later civilizations by

e) describing China, with emphasis on the development of an empire and the construction of the Great Wall;

f) describing the impact of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism.

Essential Questions

Why was the Great Wall of China built?

What were contributions of classical China to world civilization?

Why were Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism important in the formation of Chinese culture?

Essential Understandings

Classical China was centered on the Huang He (Yellow River) and was geographically isolated. Invaders entered China from the north. The Great Wall was built for China’s protection.

Chinese culture began around 1500 b.c. (b.c.e.). Of Chinese contributions to civilization, Confucianism and Taoism are among the most noted.

Essential Knowledge

Migratory invaders raided Chinese settlements from the north. Qin Shi Huangdi built the Great Wall as a line of defense against invasions. China was governed by a succession of ruling families called dynasties. Chinese rulers were considered divine, but they served under a Mandate of Heaven only as long as their rule was just.

The Silk Road facilitated trade and contact between China and other cultures as far away as Rome.

Contributions of classical China

* Civil service system
* Paper
* Porcelain
* Silk

Impact of Confucianism in forming the social order in China

* Belief that humans are good, not bad
* Respect for elders
* Code of politeness (still used in Chinese society today)
* Emphasis on education
* Ancestor worship

Impact of Taoism in forming Chinese culture and values

* Humility
* Simple life and inner peace
* Harmony with nature

Yin and yang represented opposites for Confucianism and Taoism.

Chinese forms of Buddhism spread throughout Asia.