



## ***Teacher's Guide***

### **Ancient China** **Time Compass**

**Grade Levels:**

4-8

**Subject Areas:**

Social Studies

**Synopsis:**

Innovative animation and a tongue-in-cheek approach to ancient history provide a sound introduction to the philosophy and achievements of Ancient China. Beginning with the geography of the country, the episode relates China's vast climatic contrasts to the Chinese belief in natural forces in a state of balance. Beginning at 5,000 years B.C., it traces the Chinese dynasties to the time of Qin Shi Huang and the construction of the Great Wall of China. The story of the emperor's burial with thousands of terra cotta warriors is also told. Next, the scene shifts to the birth of Confucius and the principles of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. At this point, the Time Compass recalls that the Roman Republic was expanding under the leadership of Julius Caesar. Further on, students learn about Chinese medicine, calligraphy, gardens, and Chinese inventions, including the creation of silk fabric. This naturally leads to the history of the Silk Road and Marco Polo's adventures in ancient China.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will:

- Describe the influence of the Chinese philosophy of ying and yang.
- Recall the major Chinese dynasties and the accomplishments of the emperor, Qin Shi Huang.
- Describe the inventions that originated in China.
- Recall the history of the Silk Road and Marco Polo's expeditions to China.
- Appreciate the remarkable achievements of Ancient China.

**Vocabulary:**

dynasty, caravans, terra cotta, virtue, harmony, chakras, acupuncture, pictograms, ideograms, calligraphy, porcelain, abacus

**Pre-Viewing Discussion:**

What do you know about Ancient China? For example, how was society organized in ancient China?

Can you describe the geography of China? How large is the country? How many climatic regions exist in China?

Since the country is so vast, how do you think the ancient Chinese were able to communicate with one another?

Do you think that there were likely warring factions in this ancient society? What makes you think so? Do you think that one single leader could have united the country?

**Post-Viewing Discussion:**

What idea was basic to Chinese medicine and to the Chinese view of nature?

What emperor was able to unify China? How did he do it? What happened when he died?

What inventions are credited to the ancient Chinese?

What was the Silk Road? Why was this road good for China?

**Further Activities:**

Imagine you are a peasant living in the time of the great emperor. Write a letter to the emperor telling him what you think of his leadership.

You have been given the opportunity to visit the Great Wall of China. Find out where you should start your journey and the sites you must not miss in your journey.

Use the World Wide Web to find photographs of the terra cotta soldiers that were buried with the emperor. Find out if it is true that each soldier has a unique appearance. Imagine what it must have been like to be a sculptor commissioned to make these figures.

Learn how to do calligraphy. There are many books and videos on this topic.  
Compare Chinese calligraphy with Western style calligraphy.

**Related New Dimension Media Titles:**

China (Beyond Our Borders Series)  
14 Wonders of our World (series)