* Chapter 3 Section 4
* Rise of Civilization in China
* The Chinese depended heavily on rivers for irrigation and transportation.
* Long distances and physical barriers separated China from Egypt, the Middle East and India.
* This isolation contributed to the Chinese belief that China was the center of the world and the sole source of civilization.
* These beliefs in turn led the ancient Chinese to call their land Zhongguo (pronounced: jahng gwoh), or Middle Kingdom.
* This isolation was created by
	+ The Tian Shan Mountains and the Himalayas to the north and west
	+ Thick rainforests to the southeast
	+ The Gobi Desert to the north
	+ Despite these barriers, the Chinese did have contact with the outside world, mostly through trade with neighboring people.
* The Chinese heartland lay along the east coast and the valleys of the Huang River (AKA Yellow River) and the Chang River.
* These were very fertile lands that supported a large population.
* Beyond the heartland are the outlying regions of Xinjiang (pronounced shin jyahng) and Mongolia. These regions have harsh climates and rugged terrain.
* Chinese history began in the Huang River valley where Neolithic people learned to farm.
* As in other places, the need to control the flow of the large rivers through organized water projects probably led to the rise of a strong central government and the founding of what is sometimes called the Yellow River civilization.
* The Huang River got its name from the loess, or fine windblown yellow soil, that it carries eastward from Siberia and Mongolia.
* Long ago, the Huang River earned the nickname “River of Sorrows” because as the loess settles to the bottom of the river, it raises the water level. Chinese peasants labored constantly to build and repair dikes to prevent the river from overflowing. If the dikes broke, massive floods would occur destroying crops and causing mass starvation.
* About 1766 BC, the first Chinese dynasty arose in northern China. This was the Shang Dynasty and it ruled until 1122 BC.
* The Shang rulers built large palaces and rich tombs. They built a large wall around their capital city, Anyang.
* Loyal princes and local nobles governed most of the land. They were likely the heads of important clans, or groups of families who claim a common ancestor.
* Noble women had considerable status during the Shang period. How do we know this?
	+ In one Shang tomb, archaeologists discovered the burial place of Fu Hao (pronounced foo how), wife of the Shang king Wu Ding. Artifacts show that she owned land and helped lead a large army against invaders.
* Social classes of the Shang Dynasty:
	+ At the top was the royal family and a class of noble warriors.
		- Shang warriors used leather armor, bronze weapons and horse-drawn chariots. They may have learned of chariots from other Asian people they came into contact with.
	+ Next was artisans and merchants.
		- Artisans produced goods for nobles, including weapons, clothes and jewelry. Merchants exchanged food and crafts made by local artisans for salt, certain types of shells and other goods not found in N China.
	+ The largest group was made up of peasants.

They lived together in farming villages. They led grueling lives. All family members worked in the fields, using stone tools to prepare the ground for planting or harvesting. When they weren’t in the fields they had to repair the dikes. If war broke out between noble families, the men had to fight alongside their lord.

* + - In 1122 BC, the Zhou (pronounced joh) people overthrew the Shang.
* They set up the Zhou Dynasty which lasted until 256 BC.
* To justify their rebellion against the Shang, the Zhou promoted the idea of the Mandate of Heaven, or the divine right to rule.
* They claimed that the cruelty of the last Shang king had so outraged the gods that they had sent ruin on him. So the gods passed the Mandate of Heaven on to the Zhou who took over and treated the people well.
* The Chinese later used the Mandate of Heaven to explain the dynastic cycle, or the rise and fall of dynasties.
* As long as a dynasty provided good government, it enjoyed the Mandate of Heaven. If the rulers became weak or corrupt, the Chinese believed that heaven would withdraw its support.
* Floods, famines, or other catastrophes were signs that a dynasty had lost the favor of heaven.
* In the resulting chaos, an ambitious leader might seize power and set up a new dynasty. His success and strong government would show the people that the new dynasty had won the Mandate of Heaven, and the dynastic cycle would begin again.
* The Zhou rewarded their supporters by granting them control over different regions. Thus, under the Zhou, China developed into a feudal state.
* Feudalism was a system of government in which local lords governed their own lands but owed military service and other forms of support to the ruler.
* In time, the feudal lords exercised the real power and profited from the lands worked by peasants.
* During the Zhou period, China’s economy grew. Knowledge of ironworking reached China in the 600s BC. Iron tools helped farmers produce more food.
* Also during this time, peasants began to grow new crops such as soybeans.

Chapter 3 Section 5

* Strong Rulers Unite China
* Zheng (jeng) was the powerful ruler of the Qin Dynasty and he rose to unify all of China.
* Zheng proclaimed himself Shi Huangdi (shur hwahng dee) meaning “First Emperor”.
* Even though his methods were brutal, he ushered in China’s classical age—a term historians use when a civilization sets patterns in government, philosophy, religion, science and the arts that serve as a framework for later cultures.
* Shi Huangdi spent nearly 20 years conquering most of the warring Zhou states. Then he built the strong Qin government.
* Shi Huangdi centralized power with the help of Legalist advisers.
	+ Legalism was based on the teachings of Hanfeizi (Hahn fay dzuh), who believed the nature of man was evil.
		- He said greed was the motive for most actions and the cause of most conflicts.
		- He insisted that the only way to achieve order was to pass strict laws and impose harsh punishments for crimes.
		- To Legalists, strength, not goodness, was a ruler’s greatest virtue.
	+ Huangdi made Legalism the official policy of the Qin government. He tortured, killed or enslaved many who opposed his rule. Hardest hit were the feudal nobles and the Confucian scholars who both hated his laws.
	+ Huangdi advocated the ruthless practice of book burning, ordering the destruction of all writings other than manuals on topics such as medicine or agriculture.
* Shi Huangdi abolished feudalism, which required little allegiance from the local rulers to the central government.
* He replaced the feudal states with 36 military districts and appointed loyal officials to administer them.
* He forced noble families to live in his capital city of Xianyang (shyahn yahng) so he could monitor them.
* He redistributed the lands of the displaced nobles to peasants, but they had to pay high taxes to support his armies and building projects.
* To promote unity, Shi Huangdi did the following things:
	+ Standardized weights and measures
	+ Replaced the diverse coins of the Zhou with Qin coins
	+ Had scholars create uniformity in Chinese writing
	+ Repaired and extended roads to promote transportation
* Shi Huangdi’s most remarkable and costly achievement was the Great Wall.
	+ Hundreds of thousands of laborers worked for years through the extreme weather. Many worker died in the harsh conditions.
	+ It stretches for thousands of miles across northern China.
	+ The wall did not keep invaders out of China, but it did demonstrate the emperor’s ability to mobilize China’s vast resources.
	+ The Great Wall became a symbol to the Chinese people. HOW? It divided and protected their civilization from the nomadic bands north of the wall.
* When Shi Huangdi died in 210 BC, anger over heavy taxes, forced labor and cruel policies led to revolts.
* As the Qin power officially collapsed in 206 BC, Gao Zu (gow dzoo), an illiterate peasant leader, defeated rival armies and founded the new Han Dynasty four years later.
* As emperor, Gao Zu set about restoring order and justice to his empire.
* Although he continued to unify China, he lowered taxes and eased Leaglist policies.
* He appointed Confucian scholars as government advisors.
* His policies created a strong foundation for the Han Dynasty.
* The most famous Han emperor was Wudi (woo dee), who took China to new heights. During his long reign he strengthen the government and economy.
	+ He furthered economic growth by improving canals and roads.
	+ He reorganized finances and imposed a government monopoly on iron and salt.
	+ Monopoly is the complete control of a product or business by one person or group. This exclusive sale of iron and salt gave the government a source of income other than taxes.
* Wudi followed a policy of expansionism, or expanding a country’s territory, by increasing the amount of land under Chinese rule. He fought many battles to expand China’s borders and to drive nomadic peoples beyond the Great Wall.
* Wudi opened up a network of trade routes, later called the Silk Road, that would link China and the West for centuries. This allowed new foods and goods to come in to China and also allowed the Chinese to trade their priceless silks.
* Han leaders made Confucianism the official belief system of the state.
* Han emperors adopted the system that civil servants, officials in the government, should win their position by merit, rather than through family ties as had occurred in the past.
* In the Han civil service system, a young man would start in a clerical job. Once he proved his abilities, he could move up in local government. If he continued to excel he would be recruited into the civil service and might be tested on his knowledge of government policies.
* Essential to the young man’s studies were the Five Classics, a collection of histories, poems and handbooks complied by Confucius and others that served as a guide of conduct for about 2,000 years.
* As the Han Dynasty aged, signs of decay appeared:
	+ Scheming politicians undermined emperors who no longer control the *warlords* (local military rulers)
	+ Weak emperors let canals and roads fall into disrepair
	+ Burdened by heavy taxes and crushing debt, many peasants revolted
* In AD 220, ambitious warlords overthrew the last Han emperor. After 400 years of unity, China broke up into several kingdoms.
* The Han period was one of the golden ages of Chinese civilization. Han China made many important achievements:
	+ Han scientists made advancements in the areas of chemistry, zoology, botany, and astronomy. One scientist invented the seismograph, which we still use today to measure earthquakes.
	+ In the area of medicine, the Hans promoted the medical treatment of acupuncture where the doctor inserts needles into the skin at specific points to relieve pain or treat various illnesses.
	+ An official in the Han court named Cai Lun discovered a way to make paper out of pulpwood. His basic method for manufacturing paper is still used today.
	+ The Chinese created several practical inventions such as the rudder to steer a ship, the wheelbarrow, suspension bridges.