

Activity 1.2 Building an Empire

Performance Objectives Nine groups will analyze China's physical features to divide the nation into regions; each group is then assigned to create a travel brochure for each region. Groups then combine their brochures into a bulletin board map of China, discussing commonalities and distinctive features.

Grade Level 6–9

Essential Questions How have variations in landforms and climate affected the Chinese of each era? What have been key issues for the Chinese, given the vastness and diversity of land?

Standards Social Studies

Geography

- Mapping information about people, places, and environments
- Understanding the characteristics, functions, and applications of maps
- Investigating why people and places are located where they are and what patterns can be perceived in these locations
- Describing the relationships between people and environments as well as the connections between people and places
- Formulating questions and defining geographic issues and problems
- Using a number of research tools (electronic databases, periodicals, census reports, maps, standard reference works, interviews, surveys) to locate and gather geographic information about issues and problems
- Presenting geographic information in a variety of formats
- Interpreting geographic information by synthesizing data and developing conclusions and generalizations about geographic issues and problems

Language Arts

Language for Information and Understanding

- Independently selecting and applying strategies for collecting and synthesizing information, such as note cards and bibliographies
- Using a variety of reference books and other data sources to gather information and generate independent understanding about a topic
- Taking research notes and composing a report

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Time Required

Allow three class periods for research, writing, and map building. An additional class period should be reserved for presentations and final discussion.

Materials

Transparency of **Regional Map of China** handout (create using a photocopier)
Overhead projector
White (or light colored) butcher paper
Photocopies of the blank **Terrain Map of China** handout for each group
Photocopies of the **Regional Map of China** handout
Photocopies of the **Destination China!** handout
Markers/colored pencils for making maps and booklets
Travel guide books (such as Lonely Planet, Fodor's) and possibly reference books, atlases, and Internet access

Assessment Piece

Regional map of China, travel brochures, oral presentations

Procedure

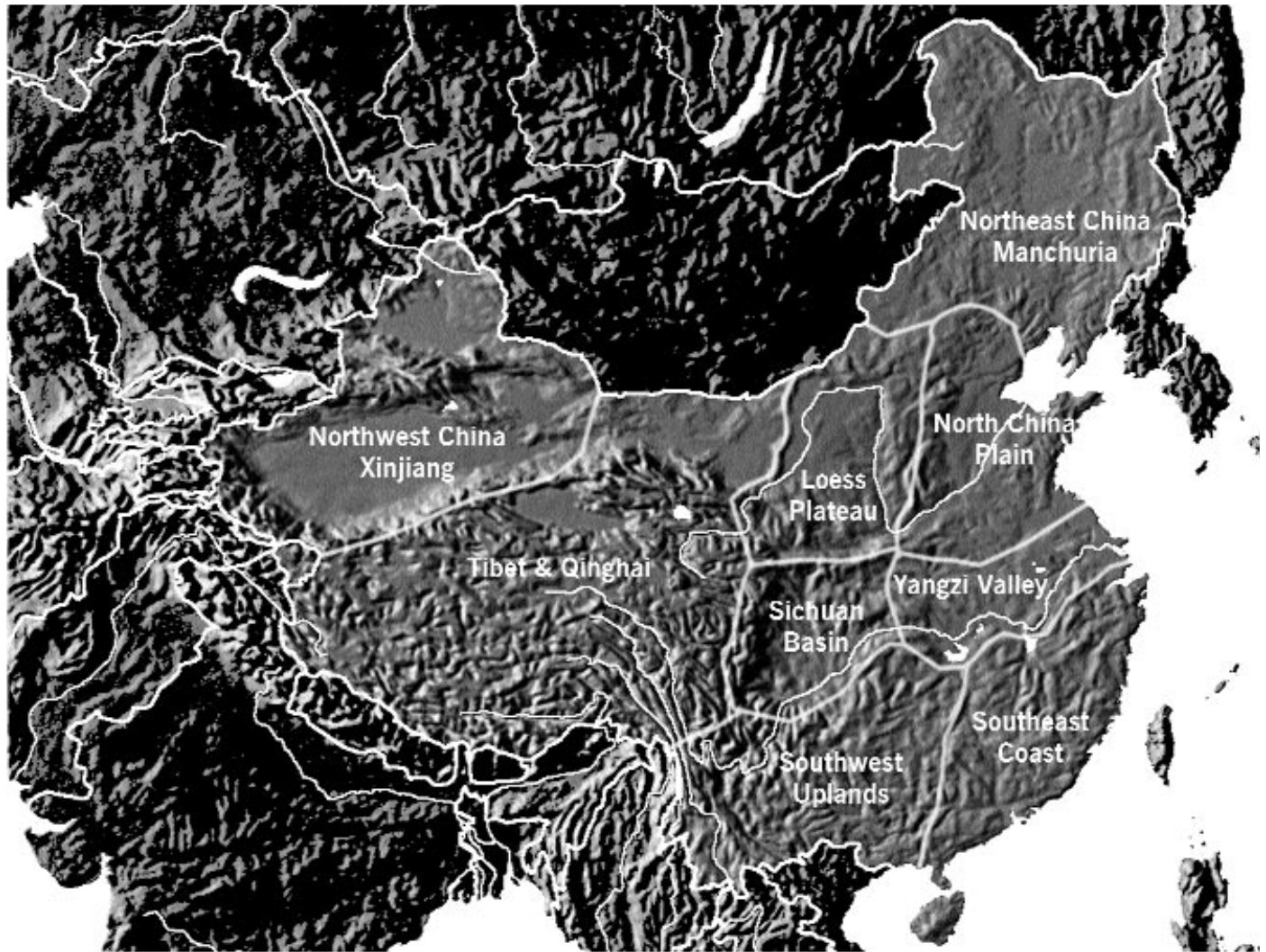
1. Using the transparency of the **Regional Map of China** handout and an overhead projector, make an enlarged version of the map on butcher paper (about the size of a bulletin board). Cut the map into the nine regions of China.
2. Photocopy and distribute the blank **Terrain Map of China** handout.
3. Divide the class into nine small groups (two to four students) and ask students to divide China into regions based on the natural features.
4. Distribute the **Regional Map of China**, and the **Destination China!** handouts marking the nine geographic regions of China.
5. Assign one region to each group. Have students use travel guides, augmented with atlases, reference books, or resources on the Web to research their assigned region's major features and create a travel brochure according to the handout.
7. Have groups reassemble the map of China and present research information, attaching their brochures to their region

Extensions

Have students look at a terrain map to divide their home into subregions. Ask them to create collages that address the terrain, climate, industry and economy, housing/shelter, and diet of their home region. Lead the class in a discussion of the similarities and differences among the individual collages.

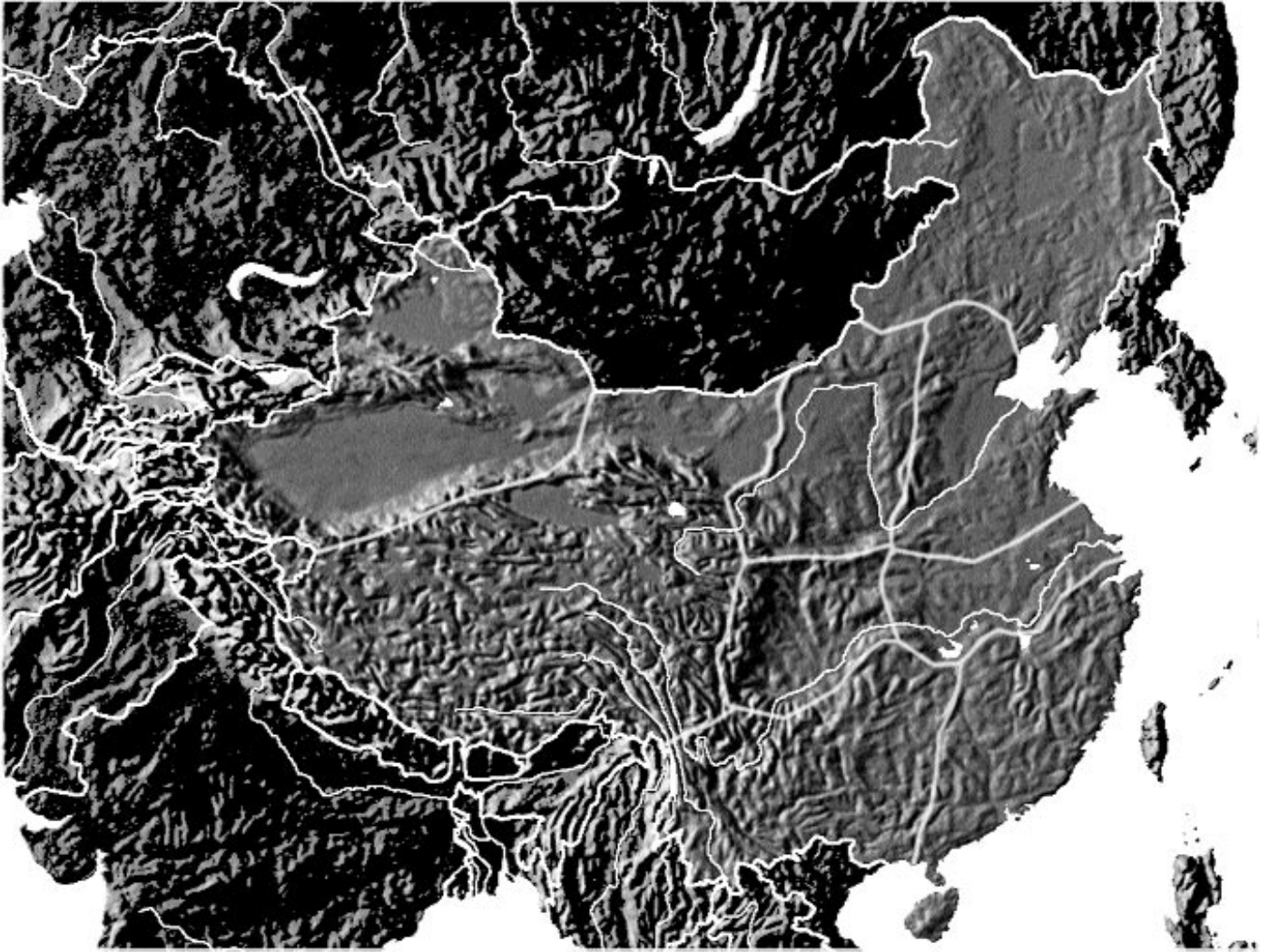
Consider staging a national conference, whereby each group serves as representatives of their region. They present, as an open letter to the nation, a list of three to five of its significant contributions and outline two resources/commodities/services for which their region is dependent on others.

Handout Regional Map of China



Mountain High Maps © 2000 Digital Wisdom and Asia Society

Handout Terrain Map of China



Mountain High Maps © 2000 Digital Wisdom and Asia Society

Handout Destination China!

You will be leading a tour group to explore one of the nine geographical regions of China and must design a brochure. Use travel guides, atlases, reference books, or resources on the Web to research your region's major features and create a travel brochure for a two week-tour.

Your brochure should include the following:

The provinces that are in your region of China.

Your itinerary (Research what major city you will have your group fly into, and how you will travel to your destinations. Be sure to factor in travel time on your itinerary. Provide a brief description of the major attractions that you will visit.)

What time of year the tour group will travel and why that is the best season to visit that region.

What should the travelers pack? (Consider the typical weather conditions for that time of year, the modes of travel, and your activities--will you be taking horse treks, climbing into Buddhist caves, or experiencing the night-life of the big cities?)

What regional foods might your tour expect to eat?

What souvenirs or regional specialties might they expect to buy?

Based on exchange rates as well as the cost of travel in China, what is the price of your tour? How much spending money do you recommend the travelers bring?