

UNIT 4 ANCIENT HISTORY LESSON 1

Summary

- In this lesson, students will read "Wall of Wonder" (pp. 38-45) and "Terra-cotta Army" (pp. 46-49) to learn about the great accomplishments of Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China.

Social Studies Background

Ying Zheng (259-210 B.C.) became king of Qin, one of China's seven independent kingdoms, in 246 B.C. He was only 13 years old and succeeded his father, Prince Yiren, who died after a short, three-year reign.

China's seven kingdoms had been at war for more than 200 years. In 230 B.C., Zheng began a campaign to overthrow the other states. And by 221 B.C., he had conquered them all. For the first time in history, China was a unified central state. Zheng proclaimed himself emperor and took on the name of Qin Shi Huang, which translates to "First Emperor of Qin."

As emperor, Qin divided China into 36 districts. He chose officials to oversee each part based on merit rather than birthright. He instituted a system of laws that rewarded obedience and had strict, standard punishments for crimes.

Qin unified China in many ways. He standardized currency, weights, measures, and written Chinese characters. He built canals and roads between villages. And to protect villages in the northern part of his empire, he built the first version of the Great Wall of China.

Qin died on September 10, 210 B.C. And in 1974, farmers digging wells stumbled upon his tomb. It is an elaborate, city-sized replica of his empire that contains about 8,000 terra-cotta warriors. There are also clay horses and chariots. The terra-cotta army stands guard, protecting the emperor in the afterlife.

ENGAGE

Encourage students to flip through the article and turn and talk with a partner to discuss what they see. Invite students to ask questions or share what they already know about the Great Wall of China and the terra-cotta warriors.

EXPLORE

Instruct students to examine the photos on pages 38-49 of their Readers. **Ask:** *What do the main subjects of these photos have in common?* (Students may note that both were built in China.) Brainstorm ideas about other things the Great Wall of China and the terra-cotta warriors could have in common.

EXPLAIN

Point out to students that the first version of the Great Wall of China and the terra-cotta army were both built by Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China. **Ask:** *Why would Qin build such a long wall over such difficult landscape?* (to protect northern villages from attacks) *Why would he want a tomb filled with terra-cotta warriors?* (to protect him in the afterlife) Have students turn and talk as they discuss what the Great Wall and the terra-cotta warriors reveal about Qin's concerns and beliefs. (He was concerned about keeping his empire intact. He believed he would rule forever.) Have students identify some of Qin's other accomplishments. (standardized coins, roads, and canals) Then have them discuss how his impact on China can still be felt today.

ELABORATE

Invite students to read the National Geographic article "Discoveries May Rewrite History of China's Terra-Cotta Warriors" (news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/10/china-first-emperor-terra-cotta-warriors-tomb/) to learn more about China's first emperor and new evidence that could change what people thought they knew about his tomb.

EVALUATE

Have students complete the **Content Assessment** for this lesson. Encourage them to share and compare their results in small groups.

Name _____

Date _____

CONTENT ASSESSMENT: Qin Shi Huang

Answer each question about the Great Wall of China and the terra-cotta warriors. Use information from the article and outside resources in your responses.

	What does it look like?	How was it built?	Why did Qin Shi Huang build it?
The Great Wall of China			
Terra-cotta Warriors			