

China's Lasting Ideas

Trace how Chinese ideas, inventions, and systems shaped society.

SS.6.W.4.8 "Describe the contributions of classical and post classical China."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline every **bold** phrase that names a Chinese contribution. Circle every *italic* phrase that explains an effect of that contribution.

Contributions Across Chinese Dynasties

- ① During the Zhou dynasty, the teacher Confucius developed **ideas about duty, education, and respect within families and government**. His teachings, later called Confucianism, said rulers should act with virtue and officials should serve responsibly. These ideas became an important contribution to Chinese government because *later leaders used them to guide behavior and public service*. In the Han dynasty, scholars preserved Confucian texts and taught them in schools. This support helped Confucianism shape Chinese society for many centuries.
- ② During the Han dynasty, craftspeople made **paper from plant fibers**, a lighter writing material than bamboo strips or silk. Government workers and scholars could keep records and copy texts more easily. This contribution mattered because *writing became less costly and knowledge could be shared more widely*. Han rulers also protected parts of the **Silk Road trade network**. As Chinese silk traveled west, goods and ideas entered China, so *the routes connected China with other societies across Eurasia*.
- ③ In postclassical China, the Sui dynasty began an **imperial examination system**, and the Tang dynasty expanded it. Men who wanted government jobs studied Confucian texts and took demanding exams. This system contributed to government because *some officials were chosen for learning rather than only family connections*. During the Song dynasty, Chinese inventors improved the **magnetic compass for navigation**. Sailors could determine direction far from land, so *Chinese ships traveled more reliably on long sea voyages between distant ports and markets*.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What were Confucian ideas a contribution to, and how did later leaders use them?

2 Why did paper made from plant fibers matter in Han China?

3 How did the Sui and Tang imperial examination system change how some officials were selected?

4 What did the magnetic compass allow sailors to do, and what was the result?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write exactly four sentences. Choose one contribution from classical China and one from postclassical China, explain an effect of each, then state which contribution you think had a greater impact and why.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline every **bold** phrase that names a Chinese contribution. Circle every *italic* phrase that explains an effect of that contribution. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What were Confucian ideas a contribution to, and how did later leaders use them?	They contributed to Chinese government. Later leaders used them to guide behavior and public service.
2	Why did paper made from plant fibers matter in Han China?	It was lighter than bamboo strips or silk, making writing less costly and allowing knowledge to be shared more widely.
3	How did the Sui and Tang imperial examination system change how some officials were selected?	Some officials were chosen for their learning and exam results rather than only for family connections.
4	What did the magnetic compass allow sailors to do, and what was the result?	It allowed sailors to determine direction far from land, so ships could travel more reliably on long sea voyages.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Confucian ideas from classical China helped leaders guide behavior and public service. The postclassical imperial examination system let some officials gain jobs through learning. I think Confucian ideas had a greater impact. They shaped Chinese society for many centuries.

Accept any accurate classical and postclassical contributions from the passage, with an accurate effect for each. The final opinion may differ if the student gives a logical reason supported by the passage.