

Ideas from Ancient China

Read how ancient Chinese arts and innovations shaped daily life.

3.7.d “describing the arts and innovations; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each art or art-making activity, circle each innovation, and number the details that tell what an innovation helped people do.

Creative Work and New Ideas

- ① Ancient Chinese artists made useful and beautiful objects. Silk workers raised silkworms and unwound their cocoons into smooth thread. They dyed and wove the thread into cloth for robes, banners, and trade. Other artists carved hard jade into small animals and ornaments. Potters shaped clay, then heated it in ovens called kilns to make bowls and jars.
- ② Ancient Chinese people also created innovations, or new tools and ways of doing things. Around 105 CE, an official named Cai Lun described an improved way to make paper from plant fibers, old cloth, and fishing nets. Paper was lighter than bamboo strips and easier to carry. People wrote letters, records, and books on it. This innovation helped ideas travel.
- ③ Chinese innovators used lodestone, a magnetic rock, to make early compasses. A compass could point people toward a direction, which helped travelers and sailors. They also developed woodblock printing. Workers carved words or pictures into a wooden block, covered it with ink, and pressed it onto paper. Printing made it possible to create many copies of a text.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Choose two arts from the passage. Describe what each artist made.

2 What materials did Cai Lun's improved paper use, and why was paper useful?

3 How could an early compass help a person traveling by land or sea?

4 Describe the steps of woodblock printing and tell one result of using it.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write two museum labels, one for ancient Chinese pottery and one for woodblock printing. In each label, name the item and tell how people made it or used it.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each art or art-making activity, circle each innovation, and number the details that tell what an innovation helped people do. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Choose two arts from the passage. Describe what each artist made.	Answers may include silk cloth for robes, banners, and trade; jade animals and ornaments; or clay bowls and jars.
2	What materials did Cai Lun's improved paper use, and why was paper useful?	It used plant fibers, old cloth, and fishing nets. Paper was lighter than bamboo strips and easier to carry, so it helped people write and share ideas.
3	How could an early compass help a person traveling by land or sea?	It could point the traveler toward a direction.
4	Describe the steps of woodblock printing and tell one result of using it.	Workers carved words or pictures into a wooden block, covered it with ink, and pressed it onto paper. It made many copies of a text possible.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Pottery: Artists shaped clay and heated it in a kiln to make bowls and jars. Woodblock printing: Workers inked carved wooden blocks to print many copies of texts.

Accept accurate descriptions drawn from the passage, including any two of the listed arts in Question 1. For the museum labels, accept clear labels that correctly describe pottery and woodblock printing in the student's own words.