



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 7.3**

China in the Middle Ages

Overall Objective: Analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the civilizations of China in the Middle Ages.

Read the chart and summary to answer questions on the next page.

MAJOR BELIEF SYSTEMS

Confucian Thought

- Status in society depended on the level of educational achievement.
- The right relationships maintained social order. Rulers should be virtuous and kind. Subjects should be loyal and obedient. Children should respect their elders.
- The influence of Buddhism changed the emphasis from education as the means to advancement in life to education as a way to achieve a set of ideas about what is right and wrong.

Buddhism

- Missionaries from India introduced Buddhist thought to China beginning in the first century.
- Buddhism taught that
 - unhappiness is part of life
 - people are unhappy because they are too attached to material possessions
 - people can learn to escape suffering by living a good life
- Buddhism spread after the collapse of the Han Dynasty in the 200s. It helped people to cope with their hardships during this period.

DYNASTIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Tang Dynasty, 618–907

- Expanded Chinese territory
- Developed an imperial state with a strong central government
- Built a network of roads and canals
- Used state exams to choose scholar-officials (educated men, mostly from the upper classes, who received government positions when they passed the exam)
- Created an elite class based on education and position in civil service
- Revived Confucianism, emphasizing the achievement of morality (living a good life) through education
- Created a law code
- Encouraged achievement in art and literature
- Became known for its horse sculptures and lively poetry

Song Dynasty, 960–1279

- Set up additional schools
- Focused the state exam on more practical matters to allow more people to pass
- Expanded trade

Yuan Dynasty (Mongols), 1279–1368

- Kept Chinese out of power
- Ended the state exam
- Encouraged foreign trade

Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644

- Sponsored Zheng He's voyages; then limited foreign trade
- Restored the state exam system
- Returned to Confucian moral standards
- Rebuilt the Great Wall of China

Tang and Song Dynasties

Oversaw technological advances that would influence history.

- Papermaking spread to Europe in the 1100s.
- Gunpowder led to deadly new weapons and a change in how people waged war.
- Magnetic compass helped later European explorers travel greater distances.
- Movable type increased the availability of books.

