

CHAPTER ELEVEN

HISTORY  
SOCIAL SCIENCE  
FRAMEWORK

FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
*Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*

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## CHAPTER 11

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# World History and Geography: Medieval and Early Modern Times

- How did the distant regions of the world become more interconnected through medieval and early modern times?
- What were the multiple ways people of different cultures interacted at sites of encounter? What were the effects of their interactions?
- How did the environment and technological innovations affect the expansion of agriculture, cities, and human population? What impact did human expansion have on the environment?

- Why did many states and empires gain more power over people and territories over the course of medieval and early modern times?
- How did major religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism) and cultural systems (Confucianism, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment) develop and change over time? How did they spread to multiple cultures?

The medieval and early modern periods provide students with opportunities to study the rise and fall of empires, the diffusion of religions and languages, and significant movements of people, ideas, and products. During these periods, the regions of the world became more and more interconnected. Although societies were quite distinct from each other, there were more exchanges of people, products, and ideas in each century. For this reason, world history during the medieval and early modern periods can be a bewildering catalog of names, places, and events that impacted individual societies, while the larger patterns that affected the world are lost.

To avoid this, teachers must focus on questions that get at the larger geographic, historical, economic, and civic patterns of the world. To answer these questions, students study content-rich examples and case studies, rather than superficially survey all places, names, and events. Students approach history not only as a body of content (such as events, people, ideas, or historical accounts) to be encountered or mastered, but also as an investigative discipline. They analyze evidence from written and visual primary sources, supplemented by secondary sources, to form historical interpretations. Both in writing and speaking, they cite evidence from textual sources to support their arguments.

The thematic questions listed above relate to the following major changes that took place during medieval and early modern times:

- Long-term growth, despite some temporary dips, in the world’s population beyond any level reached in ancient times. A great increase in agricultural and city-dwelling populations in the world compared with hunters and gatherers, whose numbers steadily declined.
- Technological advances that gave humans power to produce greater amounts of food and manufactured items, allowing the global population to keep rising.
- An increase in the interconnection and encounters between distant regions of the world. Expansion of long-distance seagoing trade, as well as commercial, technological, and cultural exchanges. By the first millennium BCE (Before Common Era), these networks spanned most of Afroeurasia (the huge interconnected landmass that includes Africa, Europe, and Asia). In the Americas, the largest networks were in Mesoamerica and the Andes region of South America. After 1500 CE (Common Era), a global network of intercommunication emerged.
- The rise of more numerous and powerful kingdoms and empires, especially after 1450 CE, when gunpowder weapons became available to rulers.
- Increasing human impact on the natural and physical environment, including the diffusion of plants, animals, and microorganisms to parts of the world where they had previously been unknown.

One of the great historical projects of the last few decades has been to shift from teaching Western civilization, a narrative that put Western Europe at the center of world events in this period, to teaching world history.

Decentering Europe is a complicated process, because themes, periods, narratives, and terminology of historical study was originally built around Europe. For example, the terms *medieval* and *early modern* were invented to divide European history into eras. Neither of the meanings of *medieval*—“middle” or “backward and primitive”—is useful for periodizing world history or the histories of China, South Asia, Southeast Asia, or Mesoamerica. Students can analyze the term *medieval* to uncover its Renaissance and Eurocentric biases, as a good introduction to the concept of history as an interpretative discipline in which historians investigate primary and secondary sources, and make interpretations based on evidence.

Themes and large questions offer cohesion to the world history course, but students also need to investigate sources in depth. For this, a useful concept is the *site of encounter*—a place where people from different cultures meet and exchange products, ideas, and technologies. A site of encounter is a specific place, such as Sicily, Quanzhou, or Tenochtitlán/Mexico City. Students may analyze concrete objects, such as a porcelain vase or the image of a saint, exchanged or made at the site. As students investigate the exchanges that took place and the interactions of merchants, bureaucrats, soldiers, and artisans at the site, they learn to consider not only what was happening in one culture but also how cultures influenced each other. Students also gain fluency in world geography through maps.

Although this framework covers the existing seventh-grade content standards, it reorganizes the units. Each of the new units has investigative questions to guide instruction and concrete examples and case studies for in-depth analysis. The new units are as follows:

1. **The World in 300 CE** (Interconnections in Afroeurasia and Americas)
2. **Rome and Christendom, 300 CE–1200** (Roman Empire, Development and Spread of Christianity, Medieval Europe, and Sicily)
3. **Southwestern Asia, 300–1200: Persia and the World of Islam** (Persia, Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, Development and Spread of Islam, Sicily, and Cairo)
4. **South Asia, 300–1200** (Gupta Empire, Spread of Hinduism and Buddhism, Srivijaya)
5. **East Asia, 300–1300: China and Japan** (China during Tang and Song, Spread of Buddhism, Korea and Japan, Quanzhou)
6. **The Americas, 300–1490** (Maya, Aztec, Inca)
7. **West Africa, 900–1400** (Ghana, Mali)
8. **Sites of Encounter in Medieval World, 1150–1490** (Mongols, Majorca, Calicut)
9. **Global Convergence, 1450–1750** (Voyages, Columbian Exchange, Trade Networks, Gunpowder Empires; Colonialism in the Americas and Southeast Asia, Atlantic World)

**10. The Impact of Ideas, 1500–1750** (The spread of Religions, Reformation, Renaissance, Scientific Revolution, Enlightenment)

## The World in 300 CE

- How interconnected were the distant regions of the world in 300 CE?

This unit serves an introduction to world regions and interconnections as of the year 300 CE. The teacher explains that a central question of the seventh-grade world history course is **How did the distant regions of the world become more interconnected through medieval and early modern times?** In this unit, students will study the interconnections of world cultures in 300 CE. The world's people were fundamentally divided into two regions: Afroeurasia (or the Eastern Hemisphere) and the Americas (or the Western Hemisphere). In the Americas, there were many different cultures. In two areas, Mesoamerica and the area along the Andean mountain spine, states and empires with large cities were supported by advanced agricultural techniques and widespread regional trade. In 300 CE, the Maya were building a powerful culture of city-states, and Teotihuacán in central Mexico was one of the largest cities in the world. These two centers traded with each other. In the Andes region, the state of Tiahuanaco extended its trade networks from modern-day Peru to Chile. While these two regions were probably not in contact with each other, trade routes crossed much of North and South America.

In Afroeurasia, there were many distinct cultures that spoke their own languages, followed distinct customs, and had little contact with other cultures. However, across the center of Afroeurasia, many cultures were connected by trade routes. These trade routes were across land, such as the Silk Road between Central Asia and China, and across seas, such as the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. Luxury goods, such as silk from China or frankincense from the Horn of Africa, traveled from merchant to merchant across Afroeurasia from the Atlantic to Pacific Coasts, but the merchants themselves did not travel that far.

A small group of elite people (wealthy, land-owning, ruling, noble, religious leaders) in each of those cultures bought imported luxury products. Besides trade goods, travelers on the trade routes carried ideas and technologies from one culture to other cultures. Missionaries of Buddhism and Christianity spread their

religious ideas. In 300 CE, the regions of Afroeurasia were much more connected to each other than ever before. However, they were not as connected and intertwined as they are today. In 300 CE, the most important influences in each culture came from within that culture, rather than from contacts with the outside world.

Although there were hundreds of different cultures in Afroeurasia, four empires, states, and cultures dominated the center of Afroeurasia: the Roman Empire (Mediterranean region and Europe), the Sasanian Persian Empire (Southwestern Asia), the Gupta Empire (South Asia), and China (East Asia). Students analyze maps that show these empires across Afroeurasia and trace the trade routes (on land and sea) that connected them.



Migrations continued to be important change factors. Along the northern edge of the agricultural regions of China, India, Persia, and Rome, in the steppe grasslands, pastoral nomad societies moved east and west. Some formed mounted warrior armies that attacked the empires of China, India, Persia, and Rome and disrupted commerce on the silk roads and land trade routes across Eurasia. In Oceania, Polynesian explorers used outrigger canoes and navigational expertise to expand their settlement to new islands across the Pacific. In sub-Saharan Africa, Bantu-speaking farmers were expanding southward and founding communities, mixing with or displacing older cattle-herding and foraging populations and expanding town and trade networks.

Between 300 and 600 CE, the disruptions caused by the migrations, attacks, and the decline of some empires (such as Han China, Parthian Persia, and the Western Roman Empire) made these times turbulent for many peoples of the world. The number of big cities declined from an estimated 75 in 100 CE to only 47 by 500 CE. But in other areas of the world, the networks of trade and interconnection expanded. As trade across the Sahara increased, Ghana emerged as a new commercial kingdom along the southern edge of the desert. The routes expanded southward to Aksum in East Africa, which flourished as a center of Indian Ocean trade. In the seventh century, a dynamic period of trade and cultural interchange

took hold across Afroeurasia. Trade and the spread of religious ideas between societies in Afroeurasia increased again.

## Rome and Christendom, 300 CE–1200

- How did the environment and technological innovations affect the growth and contraction of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, and medieval Christendom? What impact did human expansion have on the environment?
- How was Rome a site of encounter?
- How did the Roman Empire gain and maintain power over people and territories?
- How did the religion of Christianity develop and change over time? How did Christianity spread through the empire and to other cultures?
- Did the Roman Empire fall?
- How did the decentralized system of feudalism control people but weaken state power?

This unit builds on the sixth-grade study of Roman civilization. Even if students did not study the Roman Republic in sixth grade, the seventh-grade teacher should not spend time reviewing that phase of Roman history. Instead, the teacher should begin with the question **How did the environment and technological innovations affect the growth and contraction of the Roman Empire?** Rome began on the Italian peninsula and spread around the Mediterranean Sea. At its greatest extent, the empire stretched from Britain to Egypt and from the Atlantic Ocean to Iraq. It united the entire Mediterranean region for the first (and only) time.

Although the Romans did conquer northwestern Europe, they were more at home in the warm, dry climate around the Mediterranean Sea. Geographically, northern Europe lies within the temperate climatic zone that, in ancient and early medieval times, was heavily forested. Atlantic westerly winds bring high rainfall, mostly in winter, to ocean-facing Europe. Deeper into Eurasia, however, these latitudes become drier and colder.



In Mediterranean Europe, mild, rainy winters and hot, dry summers prevail. Beginning in ancient times, farmers converted forests of southern Europe into wheat fields, olive orchards, and vineyards. Farming advanced more slowly in the dense woodlands and marshes of the north. The California Education and the Environment Initiative (EEI) curriculum unit “Managing Nature’s Bounty,” 7.6.3, provides a map of the physical features and natural regions of Europe, and lesson 4 explores the products of different European regions. Students analyze what effect geographic location had on the Roman Empire and on the Germanic peoples who lived in the northern forests beyond the Danube and Rhine Rivers. Students map the extent of the empire and label the most important provinces (Egypt, Spain, Gaul, Greece, Syria) and bodies of water. They also examine Roman buildings and roads to see the application of the two most important Roman technological innovations: the arch and cement. Studying maps of roads, trade routes, and products traded within the empire shows that the Roman Empire was based on a network of cities. Those cities were dependent on trade with other regions of the empire. This is common today, but in the ancient world it was not.

Instead of reviewing the Roman Republic, the teacher begins with the Roman Empire at its height and poses the question **How was Rome a site of encounter?** A *site of encounter* is a place where people of different cultures meet and exchange products, ideas, and technologies. At the site of encounter, new products, ideas, and technologies are often created because of the exchange. Rome was a multicultural empire. Romans spoke Latin, but they conquered Egyptians, Greeks, Syrians, Jews, Celts, and Gauls, people who spoke Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, and hundreds of other languages and followed dozens of religions. Roman emperors built up the city of Rome to bring together the best from their empire and the world.

By studying Rome as a site of encounter, students explore the character and contributions of Roman civilization at its height. Residents benefited from sophisticated art, architecture, and engineering. For example, the Romans constructed huge aqueducts to bring water to cities from many miles away. Imports of grain and olive oil fed the city of between one and two million people at the height of its growth. The city featured a Colosseum for gladiatorial contests, a race track, theaters, baths (for both bathing and socializing), and elegant forums with markets and law courts.

Many great thinkers and writers, such as Pliny the Elder, Juvenal, Plutarch, and Virgil (or Vergil), lived and wrote during the Roman peace (*Pax Romana*), the two centuries of prosperity that began with the reign of Augustus Caesar (27 BCE–14 CE). However, this prosperity was based on riches from conquest and slave labor on large agricultural estates that provided food and luxuries for the cities. Wealthy Romans also purchased luxuries, such as silk from China, medicines and jewels from India, and animals from sub-Saharan Africa, brought into the empire by merchants on the Silk Road and other Afroeurasian trade routes.

Next, students examine the question **How did the Roman Empire gain and maintain power over people and territories?**

After Augustus, Rome was ruled by an emperor who, in theory, had total power. However, in practice, the power of the emperor was limited by the lack of an effective administration, except in the military. The Roman legions were the source of imperial authority. For civilian

government, the empire relied on attracting local elites (landowners, wealthy and/or powerful people, religious leaders) to become local administrators. Corruption was a huge problem, and military leaders had too much power.

However, the unity of Rome and the power of its culture gave many people a strong reason to support the empire. Roman citizenship was initially given to people from the provinces as a reward for service (for example, to retired auxiliary soldiers). They and their sons then had the right to vote. Gradually, everyone in the provinces gained citizenship, except for slaves. Broadening citizenship was a deliberate policy of certain emperors who believed it would cause more people to support the empire and help it run smoothly. Roman laws also helped solidify the empire. A body of laws was passed down through the centuries and ultimately influenced legal systems in modern states such as France, Italy, and Spain, as well as in Latin American countries.



## Grade Seven Classroom Example: The Roman Empire

To understand the Roman perspective on the empire's power over other people and territories, students do a close reading of an excerpt from Vergil's *Aeneid* (Book VI, lines 845–853). Mr. Taylor gives students a copy of the excerpt with the following guiding question: **What did the poet Vergil think about the Roman Empire's power over people and territories?** The handout also has a sentence deconstruction chart for the excerpt and a source analysis template.

For the first reading, the students read the excerpt to themselves and then discuss these questions: **Did Vergil think Roman power was good or bad for the conquered people? What words support your answer?** For the second reading, Mr. Taylor guides the students through a sentence deconstruction chart, pointing out the parallel phrases describing the “others” (the Greeks and Persians) and “you” (the Romans). The students also complete the source analysis template, with information from the textbook or teacher notes. They learn that Vergil was a Roman poet in the first century BCE. His patron was Augustus Caesar, the founder of the Roman Empire.

The historical context for the writing of the *Aeneid* was the beginning of the Roman Empire. In fact, Vergil wrote this poem to glorify the new empire and Augustus as its leader. For the third reading, Mr. Taylor divides the students into pairs. Each pair marks up the text with cognitive markers and annotates it in the margins. He then displays several of the pairs' annotated texts on the elmo (document projector), explains difficult points, and answers questions. For the fourth reading, students answer text-dependent questions. For the final question, Mr. Taylor calls for an interpretation to answer the guiding question.

**CA HSS Content Standard:** 7.1.1

**CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8):** Research, Evidence, and Point of View 5, Historical Interpretation 1

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RH.6–8.1, 2, 6, SL.7.1, L5a

**CA ELD Standards:** ELD.PI.7.1, 6a

In the late second century, the Romans came up against limits. Roman armies could not defeat the Persian Empire in the east, and there was little reason to expand into the rural communities and forests of northeastern Europe. Deprived

of its income from conquest, Rome still had to defend its frontier on the Rhine and Danube Rivers from the Germanic peoples and its border with the Persian Sasanian Empire in the east. In the third century, the emperors Diocletian and Constantine divided the Roman Empire in two and reformed the empire to focus its resources on military defense. Constantine established a new capital for the Eastern Roman Empire at Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople.

At this point, the teacher shifts to the development of Christianity. In the early years of the Roman Empire, Christianity began as a sect of Judaism in Judea, a province of the Roman Empire. The teacher focuses on the following questions: **How did the religion of Christianity develop and change over time? How did Christianity spread through the empire and to other cultures?** Through selections from Biblical literature, students will learn about those teachings of Jesus that advocate compassion, justice, and love for others. He taught that God loved all his creation, regardless of status or circumstance, and that humans should reflect that love in relations with one another. Jesus shared the Jewish belief in one God, but he added the promise of eternal salvation to those who believe in him as their savior. The Roman authorities in Judea executed Jesus. But under the leadership of his early followers, notably Paul, a Jewish scholar from Anatolia, Christians took advantage of Roman roads and sea-lanes to travel widely, preaching to both Jews and others.

As missionaries spread Christianity beyond the Jewish community, they abandoned some Jewish customs, such as dietary laws, to make the new religion more accessible to non-Jews. Christian communities multiplied around the Mediterranean, through Persia, and into Central Asia. The church communities welcomed new converts without consideration of their political or social standing, including the urban poor and women. Although ancient Christianity was a patriarchy and all the apostles were men, several women were prominent, especially Mary, mother of Jesus. Until modern times, Christian women had few property rights and were subordinate to men. Upper-class and influential Romans who converted appear to have been predominantly women, and some of them assumed leadership positions. Many Jews did not convert to Christianity, and Judaism and Christianity split into two separate religions.

The Romans had an official state religion (Jupiter, Juno, deified former emperors), but they allowed people they had conquered to follow other religions.

However, after some Jews rebelled against Roman rule, the Romans exiled many Jews from Judea, which led to the *diaspora*, or spreading out, of Jewish communities across Afroeurasia. Christians also got into trouble with Roman authorities because Christians refused to attend the official sacrifices to the Roman gods. The Roman authorities sometimes persecuted Christians and executed them, but at other times, Christians were left alone.

In the fourth century CE, Emperor Constantine legalized the religion of Christianity, and soon after, it became Rome's state religion. Constantine wanted the Christian Church to unify and support the now divided Roman Empire. As it became a state religion, Christianity changed. The bishops who had been leaders of semisecret, persecuted communities were now charged with supporting the Roman Empire. Constantine insisted that the bishops hold a council at Nicaea and agree on one set of Christian beliefs, summarized in the Nicene Creed. Church leaders selected certain texts (gospels and letters) for the official Christian Bible, which was translated into Latin. They organized the Christian Church with a Roman structure and gave their support to Roman authorities. Church leaders then vigorously tried to convert everyone to Christianity. As the Western Roman Empire shrank, Christian bishops often took over the administration and defense of Roman cities.

The teacher points out that all religions change over time. In the historical context of 203 CE, when Christians were sometimes persecuted by the Romans, martyrs were admired and made into saints of the early church. When Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, the religion changed again, and the new emphasis was on obeying Roman authorities, behaving well, and converting nonbelievers to Christianity. The teacher concludes by telling students that they will return to this question about the development and changes in Christianity later in the unit.

Teachers now introduce students to the question **Did the Roman Empire fall?** In 476 CE, the empire in the west disappeared, though the eastern half continued to thrive. As the Byzantine Empire, this Greek-speaking Roman state survived until 1453. Students examine the evidence (from the textbook or teacher notes) and form their own interpretations to answer the guiding question. They examine factors that might have contributed to the collapse of western Rome: declining financial resources, political corruption and insubordinate military groups,

excessive reliance on slave labor, depopulation from epidemics, and worsening frontier assaults, as the Huns migrated westward and pushed waves of Germanic tribes into the empire. By the time the Western Roman Empire ended in 476 CE, it had already shrunk into a small area, a shadow of its former extent.

The teacher may point out that mounted warrior armies from Central Eurasia caused problems for empires and kingdoms in China, India, and Persia as well, and contributed to a decline of trade on the silk roads and other land routes across Eurasia between 300 and 600 CE. The teacher has students meet together in groups to discuss the question and use their notes to make a T-chart of the reasons and evidence that support the position favoring the “fall” of Rome, and the reasons and evidence for the position denying the “fall” of Rome.

Then the groups evaluate the reasons and evidence and formulate a one-sentence interpretation as an answer to the question **Did the Roman Empire fall?** The teacher also explains that if they argue that Rome did not fall, they should choose another word to characterize the end of the Western Roman Empire and the transition to the Byzantine Empire in the east. After student groups prepare their T-charts and write their interpretations, a student volunteer from each group writes the group’s interpretation on the board. Groups share their reasons and evidence for and against, as the teacher records it on a T-chart on the board. Then the teacher and students review and discuss each of the interpretations.

The teacher instructs student groups to review and revise their interpretations, if necessary, and identify the two pieces of evidence that best support their interpretation. The teacher explains that evidence must be specific. After students have selected the evidence in groups, each student writes a paragraph answering the question **Did the Roman Empire fall?** They must include two pieces of evidence. To support English learners, the teacher provides a paragraph frame that starts each sentence with appropriate academic historical language.

Next, students study the Byzantine Empire by seeking an answer to the question **How did the environment and contact with other cultures affect the growth and contraction of the Byzantine Empire?** The Eastern Roman Empire was stronger than the Western portion. It had more people, more cities, greater manufacturing and commerce, more tax revenues, and more effective defenses against mounted

warrior attacks from the north. Its military strength and wealth from the Afroeurasian luxury trade caused a flowering culture in the period between 600 and 1000 CE. The Byzantine Empire, as the eastern lands became known, had strong historical connections to earlier Hellenistic civilization. Its language was Greek, not Latin. This state was highly centralized around its capital of Constantinople and the rule of the emperor and his officials. The Christian church in the Byzantine Empire was closely connected to the emperor and his administration.

The Byzantine Empire continued the Roman Empire's conflicts with the Persians along the eastern frontier. This long conflict weakened both empires and left them vulnerable when Muslim armies attacked in the mid-seventh century. Although Muslim Arabs conquered the Sasanid Empire, the Byzantine Empire survived but lost huge territories in North Africa and western Asia. The Byzantine Empire shrank, but it did not fall until 1453.

In the fourth and fifth centuries, the Western Roman Empire fragmented, causing population to fall, cities to shrink, and agriculture to contract. As the empire shrank, Germanic armies and migrants overran Europe, dividing the region into small, rudimentary kingdoms. The teacher begins to prepare students for the following question: **How did the decentralized system of feudalism control people but weaken state power?** The teacher points out that early medieval kingdoms did not have strong authority. Local leaders and landholders were much more effective rulers of their small territories. In the Middle Ages, all power was local, not centralized in a state. Over the next few centuries, there was little trade, and most cities disappeared.

In the eighth century, a Muslim dynasty founded a strong state in Iberia. Charlemagne (768–814) was an exceptionally strong Christian king, who temporarily united a large part of Europe in the late eighth century and contributed much to the advancement of Latin literacy, learning, and the arts. Students may read excerpts from Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne* to analyze the factors that made Charlemagne's rule so successful.

After Charlemagne, political order was again fragmented by Viking, Magyar, and Muslim invasions. Local power, established in parts of Western Christendom through feudal relations, was the key to defeating the invaders. In feudalism, kings

and powerful regional rulers offered protection and farm estates, or manors, to less powerful knights in return for loyalty and military service. The manors provided the income needed for a knight's horses, armor, and training. Knights, as lords of the manors, also controlled the serfs—peasants who were tied permanently to the manor and obligated to give their lord labor and crops in return for security. Knights, regional lords, and aristocrats gained rights to hand down fiefs to heirs. Mothers and prospective wives often exerted great influence over marriages and family alliances. Gradually, the elite mounted warriors began to be known as nobles.

These nobles wanted to keep control over local areas rather than to give power to the king and central government. Students learn about the conflict between King John and the great nobles in England, who forced the king to grant the Magna Carta. This document guaranteed trial by jury of one's peers and the concept of no taxation without representation. From this root, other medieval developments in England, such as common law and Parliament, gradually limited the king's power and laid the foundations of English constitutional monarchy.

In addition to considering the political aspects of feudalism, students look at these questions: **How did the environment and technological innovations affect the growth of medieval Christendom? What impact did human expansion have on the environment?** In the tenth century, serfs and free peasants employed new technologies, such as the moldboard plow and the horse collar, to cultivate new farmland and boost agricultural production.

Around 1000 CE, these innovations caused an agricultural revolution in Western Christendom, which caused the population to increase, trade to expand, and cities to grow again. In this expansion, many of the forests of northern Europe were cut down, as humans used wood for heating and cooking and cleared land for farming. Lessons 2 and 3 of California EEI curriculum unit “Managing Nature’s Bounty: Feudalism in Medieval Europe,” 7.6.3, analyze how feudal relations and the manor system allocated ecosystem resources, and how physical geography influenced feudal administrative positions and resource management.

As students return to study of Christianity, they return to the question **How did the religion of Christianity develop and change over time?** First, they trace on a map the spread of Christianity across Europe and Afroeurasia (as far east as



Central Asia). In the Middle Ages, people called the Christian parts of Europe *Christendom*, which shows that an important part of their identity was being Christian. Since kings and states were so weak, the Church, whose hierarchy of clerics extended from the Pope down to the village priest, became the largest, most integrated organization in Europe. The Church followed a hierarchy adopted from the Roman Empire. Missionaries spread out to convert Germanic and Slavic peoples to Christianity.

Christianity spread in Central and Eastern Europe, facilitating the formation of states such as Poland in 966. Although most of the conversions were voluntary, some Christian kings forced people to convert to Christianity, as Charlemagne did to the Saxons in early 800s. Wealthy Christians donated land to monasteries, filled with monks and nuns who pledged themselves to live separately from the world. These monks and nuns were the only educated people, and they devoted themselves to copying Roman and Christian texts. Around 900, popes began to assert their control over the church hierarchy, which brought them into conflict with secular monarchs.



Students learn about the split between the Orthodox Church, which acknowledged the leadership of the patriarch of Constantinople, and the Catholic Church, which recognized the authority of the pope in Rome. Churches in Eastern Europe (Russian, Greek, Serbian) followed the Orthodox or Greek Church, since missionaries led by Constantinople had converted their people to Christianity. Because

missionaries led by Rome had converted people in Western, Central, and Northern Europe, these remained in “the Church,” also called the Latin Church and, later, the Roman Catholic Church.

## Southwestern Asia, 300–1200: Persia and the World of Islam

- How did the environment affect the development and expansion of the Persian Empire, Muslim empires, and cities? What impact did this expansion have on the environment?
- How did Islam develop and change over time? How did Islam spread to multiple cultures?
- What were the multiple ways people of different cultures interacted at the sites of encounter, such as Baghdad?
- Why was Norman Sicily a site of encounter?
- What were the effects of the exchanges at Cairo?
- How did the Muslim empires and institutions help different regions of Afroeurasia become more interconnected?

This unit examines the geography of Southwestern Asia (including the Middle East), the Persian Sasanian Empire, the emergence and development of Islam, the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, the spread of Islam, and interactions at three sites of encounter: Baghdad in the eighth century, Sicily in the twelfth century, and Cairo in the fourteenth century. The teacher begins with introducing the following questions: **How did the environment affect the development and expansion of the Persian Empire, Muslim empires, and cities? What impact did this expansion have on the environment?** A climatic map of Southwestern Asia shows that much of this area falls within a long belt of dry country that extends from the Sahara Desert to the arid lands of northern China.

In lesson one of California EEI curriculum unit “Arabic Trade Networks,” 7.2.5, students examine the physical features and natural systems of the Arabian Peninsula and the human improvements to farming practices, which increased supplies of food. Across this dry zone, including Arabia, pastoral nomads herded camels and other animals, and oasis cities sheltered farmers, artisans, and merchants. North of the Arabian Peninsula is the lush agricultural land of Mesopotamia and Persia. Here settled farmers had supported an advanced civilization going back to ancient Mesopotamia. A map of the Eastern Hemisphere

also shows students that Southwestern Asia, Persia, Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf were natural channels for land and sea trade in spices, textiles, and many other goods between the Indian Ocean world and the Mediterranean area. These geographic factors put Southwestern Asia and Arab, Persian, and Indian merchants and sailors at the center of the Afroeurasian trade networks, which began to grow dynamically after the seventh century.

The teacher turns briefly to the Persian Sasanian Empire from 300 to 651, when it was conquered by Muslim armies. The teacher reminds students that the Persian Empire (under different names that are not important for the students to memorize) had existed from about 550 BCE and was the heir to the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia. It was the most important state in Southwestern Asia and Rome and the Byzantine Empire's great rival for power in the eastern Mediterranean and western Asia. In the sixth century, the Sasanians ruled an empire that began at the Euphrates River and covered modern Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and parts of central Asia. Their ruler was called by the title "King of Kings."

The official religion of Persia was Zoroastrianism, but the Persians practiced religious tolerance. Many Jews and Christians lived in the Persian Empire. Every land trade route across central Eurasia passed through the Persian Empire, and the tax income from the trade made the Persians wealthy. Continued warfare against the Byzantine Empire weakened the Sasanian Persian Empire in the mid-seventh century and contributed to its fall to Muslim armies.

The students now turn to the emergence of the religion of Islam, as they study the questions **How did Islam develop and change over time? How did Islam spread to multiple cultures?** Along with Judaism and Christianity, Islam is an "Abrahamic" religion, that is, a faith built on the ancient monotheism of Abraham. Beginning in 610, Muhammad (570–632 CE), a resident of the small Arabian city of Mecca, preached a new vision of monotheistic faith. According to Muslim tradition, Muhammad, an Arabic-speaking merchant, received revelations from God, which were written down in the *Qur'an*. This message declared that human beings must worship and live by the teachings of the one God and treat one another with equality and justice. Divine salvation will come to the righteous, but those who deny God, *Allah* in Arabic, will suffer damnation. God's commandments require all men and women to live virtuously by submitting to Allah and following the Five Pillars.

Like Christianity, there is an afterlife in Islam; faithful believers are promised paradise after death. Islamic teachings are set forth principally in the *Qur'an* and the *Hadith*, the sayings and actions of Muhammad. These were the foundation for the Shariah, the religious laws governing moral, social, and economic life. Islamic law, for example, rejected the older Arabian view of women as “family property,” declaring that all women and men are entitled to respect and moral self-governance, even though Muslim society, like all agrarian societies of that era, remained patriarchal, that is, dominated politically, socially, and culturally by men.

Muhammad also founded a political state in order to defend the young Muslim community. He led armies of desert tribes to take over all of the Arabian Peninsula. After his death, the leaders of the Muslim community chose one of his followers to be their new leader, with the title *caliph*. The caliphs sent armies northward to conquer part of the Christian Byzantine Empire and all of the Persian Sasanian Empire.

As the Muslim conquests multiplied, the Umayyad Dynasty of caliphs ruled an empire called the Umayyad Caliphate. Muslim armies continued to conquer land until by 750 CE, the Umayyad Caliphate extended from Spain all the way to the valley of the Indus. Muslims often did not force Christians or Jews, “people of the book,” to convert, but some Muslim rulers did force some non-Muslims to convert. Non-Muslims had to pay a special tax to the caliphate. Gradually more and more people in the caliphate converted to Islam, and Arabic, the language of both the conquerors and the *Qur'an*, achieved gradual dominance across much of Southwestern Asia (except in Persia) and North Africa. The Umayyad Caliphate broke into several states after 750, but most of the Middle East remained unified under the caliphs of the Abbasid Dynasty (751–1258) with its capital in Baghdad.

The teacher introduces the new capital of Baghdad as the next site of encounter, with the following question: **What were the multiple ways people of different cultures interacted at sites of encounter, such as Baghdad?** The teacher asks students to think about what they have just studied about the spread of the Muslim Empire as one way people of different cultures interact. That is, Arabs, who were nomadic tribesmen from Arabia, converted to a new religion and, inspired by that religion, fought wars against other cultures. One type of cultural interaction is war. After the conquest, people of other cultures had to live under Umayyad Muslim rule and, if they belonged to another religion, pay special taxes.

This type of cultural interaction is called *coexistence* in communities. Another type is *adoption and adaptation*. Some of these conquered people adopted the new religion for various reasons, such as religious conversion, access to political power, and socioeconomic advantages. As they converted, they changed their names, their social identity, and associated with Muslims in their area rather than with their home group of Jews, Christians, or others. Over time, they adopted more of Arab culture as well. However, as they adopted the Muslim religion and Arab culture, they also adapted religious and cultural practices to accommodate local customs. For example, the custom of secluding elite women inside a special part of the house and allowing them to go out only when their hair and most of their bodies were covered predates the religion of Islam. It was actually a Persian and Mediterranean (and ancient Athenian) custom. Before Islam, Arabian women were not confined to the household. The Persians and Mediterranean people who converted to Islam adapted social practices to include their custom. This is just one example of the cultural adaptation process.

Under the Abbasids, Baghdad grew from an insignificant village to one of the leading cities of the world. The city's culture was a mix of Arab, Persian, Indian, Turkish, and other South Asian and Central Asian cultures. The Abbasids encouraged both the growth of learning and borrowing from Greek, Hellenistic, and Indian science and medicine. They built schools and libraries; translated and preserved Greek philosophic, scientific, and medical texts; and supported scientists who expanded that knowledge.

In Baghdad and other Muslim-ruled cities, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars collaborated to study ancient Greek, Persian, and Indian writings, forging and widely disseminating a more advanced synthesis of philosophical, scientific, mathematical, geographic, artistic, medical, and literary knowledge. To investigate the question **What did the interaction of Arab, Persian, Greek, Hellenistic, and Indian ideas and technologies at Baghdad (and the Abbasid Caliphate) produce?**, students analyze visuals of libraries, schools, and scientific drawings from Muslim manuscripts; the circulation of “Arabic” numerals; and words of Arabic origin (such as *algebra*, *candy*, *mattress*, *rice*). The teacher sets up a gallery walk and provides student groups with a source analysis template. Students use the template to record source information, describe the contents of the visual, and cite evidence from the visual that answers the lesson question. Students share some of their observations

and answers with the whole class, as the teacher lists the products on the board. Then the teacher guides students by developing a one-sentence interpretation that answers the question. The students then return to their groups to discuss the evidence they have gathered. The teacher stresses that they should choose the best two pieces of evidence from their gallery walk. The group chooses two pieces of evidence, and each group member completes an evidence-analysis chart (with columns for evidence, meaning, significance, and source). The teacher displays several group charts on the document projector, clears up any misconceptions, and showcases examples of good evidence choices, analyses, and citations.

After 900, the Abbasid Empire began to fragment into many smaller states. However, the common knowledge of Arabic, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and extensive trade and travel unified the Muslim world. Islam continued to spread, sometimes by conquest, but also by the missionary work of *Sufis* and traveling Muslim merchants. Sufi saints and teachers combined local and Islamic traditions, and inspired common people on the frontier areas of the Muslim world—East Africa, Southeast Asia, and South Asia—to convert.

The teacher now tells students that they will look at Western Christendom and the world of Islam together. By studying the site of encounter in twelfth-century Norman Sicily and using the History Blueprint's Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World unit, they start with the question **Why was Norman Sicily a site of encounter?** Because of its geographic location, multicultural population, and tolerant rulers, the Norman kingdom of Sicily was a major site of exchange among Muslims, Jews, Latin Roman Christians, and Greek Byzantine Christians in the twelfth century. At the same time, Latin Christian crusaders were battling with Syrian, Arab, Egyptian, and North African Muslim warriors over territory and religious differences. Whereas in the past, historians placed

The History Blueprint is a curriculum developed by the California History–Social Science Project (CHSSP) (<http://chssp.ucdavis.edu>) and designed to increase student literacy and understanding of history. Three units are available as downloads free of charge from the CHSSP's Web site. Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World is a comprehensive standards-aligned unit for seventh-grade teachers that combines carefully selected and excerpted primary sources, original content, and substantive support for student literacy development. For more information or to download the curriculum, visit <http://chssp.ucdavis.edu/programs/historyblueprint>.

emphasis on religious differences and the Crusades, historians now emphasize the common features of these Mediterranean cultures and the many ways in which Christians, Muslims, and Jews interacted. The Sicily lesson reflects this new approach to world history through the medieval Mediterranean. Rather than directly teaching one interpretation, the teacher presents the primary sources, guides students through analysis of the evidence, and asks students to form their own interpretation to answer the following question: **Was there more trade (with peace and tolerance) or conflict (especially conflict between religious groups)?** Students investigate Al-Idrisi’s world map, excerpts from Geoffrey Malaterra and Ibn Jubayr, documents from the Cairo Geniza and the Venetian archives, lists of trade goods, and visuals of objects created and sold in Sicily, engage in map activities, close readings, a gallery walk, and discussion. Students analyze the content of the lesson in a graphic organizer that also introduces them to the concept of cause-and-effect historical reasoning.

The central position of the Islamic world in Afroeurasia became increasingly important as trade and exchange expanded. Muslim merchants, scholars, and Sufis traveled between the great cities, such as Córdoba, Damascus and Cairo, which produced luxury goods such as steel swords and embroidered silk capes. Students investigate the question **How did the Muslim empires and institutions help different regions of Afroeurasia become more interconnected?** through the



second site of encounter in the History Blueprint lesson: Cairo in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Cairo was at the center of the network of roads, sea routes, and cities that supported trade and pilgrimage in the Islamic world, making it one of the most important trade cities in Afroeurasia.

Students work with the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World interactive map either online or through the teacher’s projection to make an interpretation about the following question: **What advantages did Cairo have as a trade city?** Either individually or in pairs, students read a secondary informative text titled “Cairo Background Reading,” answer text-dependent questions, and, in a group,

summarize the main ideas of the text in a cause-and-effect graphic organizer around the following question: **What were the effects of the exchanges at Cairo?**

The Islamic world was a network of cities tied together by a common religion, pilgrimage, trade, and intellectual culture. Islamic institutions, such as the pilgrimage (or *hajj*), caravans, *caravanserais*, *funduqs*, *souqs*, *madrassas*, and favorable policies of city and state governments provided major assistance to merchants and travelers. In a gallery walk of primary-source visuals of and text excerpts about these institutions, students gather and analyze evidence by using an evidence-analysis chart.

The same routes also transmitted technologies and food plants. For example, paper-making technology reached the Southwestern Asia from China around the eighth century and spread from there to Europe in the following 300 years. Food plants, including sugarcane, oranges, melons, eggplants, and spinach, were diffused widely along the exchange routes. Lesson three of California EEI curriculum unit “Arabic Trade Networks,” 7.2.5, helps students analyze the circulation of regional products throughout Afroeurasia.

Less positive things also spread along trade routes, such as the bubonic plague. The Black Death of the 1300s killed millions in China and caused the population of Europe and the Muslim world to plummet temporarily by about one-third. In the Cairo lesson, students read primary sources from Ibn Battuta, Agnolo di Tura, and al-Maqrizi describing the impact of the Black Death of 1348–1350 in Europe and the Muslim world.

Using the lesson sources, graphic organizers and evidence-analysis charts, students write an argumentative paragraph on the following question: **Which of the effects of the exchanges at Cairo do you think was the most important?** They make a claim, state their reasons, and support the reasons with evidence from the primary sources. The “Effects Paragraph” assignment has sentence starters for the claim and reasons and an evidence-analysis chart that helps student paraphrase, analyze, and cite evidence. For English learners, there are also sentence frames with appropriate academic and disciplinary language to paraphrase, analyze, and cite the two pieces of evidence. After providing feedback to students on their claims, reasons, and use and analysis of evidence, the teacher concludes by telling students that they will return to the Islamic trade and pilgrimage



network in future units. Muslim merchants eventually traded from China to the Mediterranean, and Jewish merchants also traded freely in the Muslim world. They established communities across Afroeurasia that were connected by family ties and trade connections.

## South Asia, 300–1200

- Under the Gupta Empire, how did the environment, cultural and religious changes, and technological innovations affect the people of India?
- How did Indian monks, nuns, merchants, travelers, and empires from what is now modern India and other parts of South Asia spread religious ideas and practices and cultural styles of art and architecture to Central and Southeast Asia?
- How did the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism spread and change over time?

The Gupta monarchs reunified much of the subcontinent in the third century CE, ushering in what some scholars have termed the “Classical Age” of India. As they study the question **Under the Gupta Empire, how did the environment, cultural and religious changes, and technological innovations affect the people of India?**, students learn that the Gupta Dynasty (280–550 CE) presided over a rich period of religious, socioeconomic, educational, literary, and scientific development, including the base-ten numerical system and the concept of zero. The level of interaction in all aspects of life—commercial, cultural, religious—among peoples across various regions of the Indian subcontinent was intensive and widespread during this time period, much more so than in earlier periods. This helped produce a common Indic culture that unified the people of the subcontinent. Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples and schools spread. Sanskrit became the principal literary language in many regions of the Indian subcontinent.

Enduring contributions from the cultures of what is now modern India and other parts of South Asia to other areas of Afroeurasia include the cotton textile industry, the technology of crystalizing sugar, astronomical treatises, the practice of monasticism, the game of chess, and the art, architecture, and performing arts of the Classical Age. Students analyze maps indicating the extent of the Gupta

Empire and visuals of its achievements in science, math, art (including music such as *Tabla* and dance such as *katthak*, *bharatnatyam*), architecture, and Sanskrit literature.

After the fall of the Gupta Empire, the Indian subcontinent was divided into regional states and kingdoms. The Chola Empire ruled over much of southern India and established maritime commercial trading networks throughout much of the Indian Ocean. The Chola are associated with significant artistic achievement that included the building of monumental Hindu temples and the creation of remarkable sculptures and bronzes.

Building on their previous study of Hinduism in grade six, students study the question **How did Hinduism change over time?** Hinduism continued to evolve with the Bhakti movement, which emphasized personal expression of devotion to God, who had three aspects: Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the protector; and Siva, the transformer. The Bhakti movement emphasized on social and religious equality and a personal expression of devotion to God in the popular, vernacular languages. The Bhakti movement also critiqued the power held by priestly elites. People of all social groups now had personal access to their own personal deities, whom they could worship with songs, dances, processions, and temple visits. Bhakti grew more popular, thanks to saints such as Meera Bai and Ramananda. Even though India was not unified into one empire or religion, the entire area was developing a cultural unity.

Students next examine this question: **How did Indian monks, nuns, merchants, travelers, and empires from what is now modern India and other parts of South Asia spread religious ideas and practices and cultural styles of art and architecture to Central and Southeast Asia?** During and after the Gupta Empire, trade connections among India and the rest of South Asia and Southeast Asia facilitated the spread of Hindu and Buddhist ideas to Srivijaya, a large trading empire after 600; Java; and the Khmer Empire.

In the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World lesson six (Calicut, the “Indian and Southeast Asian Art”) activity, students compare art and architecture from India and Southeast Asia. When students have compiled their evidence, the teacher asks them why they think Southeast Asian rulers would adopt religious ideas and artistic styles from Indian kingdoms. After they share their interpretations, the

teacher points out that premodern rulers displayed their power through temples and that the architectural similarities among the temples are evidence of a shared culture of rulership in the region.

Students are invited to make connections among types of influences they can identify in modern-day culture. Students may also be invited to analyze change through compare and contrast—what is the same or different now regarding how cultures influence and are influenced by other cultures. In addition to personal religious motives, Southeast Asian kings could build up their prestige and legitimacy by adopting the cultural, religious, and artistic styles of the powerful and prestigious Indian kingdoms and empires.

Next, students examine the question **How did Buddhism spread and change over time?** Buddhist missionaries and travelers carried Buddhism from the Indian subcontinent to Central Asia and then to China, as well as to Southeast Asia, during this period. At the same time, Christian and Muslim missionaries were also spreading their religions. As it moved outside the Indian subcontinent and became a universal religion, Buddhism changed. In 600 BCE, Buddha was a sage, a wise man; but by 300 CE, his followers were worshipping the Buddha as a god. *Nirvana* changed from “nothingness” or “extinction” to a kind of heaven for believers in the afterlife.

Mahayana Buddhists also added the idea that there were *bodhisattvas*, divine souls who delayed entering nirvana to help others on earth. Either here, or in the China unit, students trace the journey of Xuanzang, who departed from China in 627 CE on a pilgrimage to Buddhist holy sites in present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Nepal. He returned home with 527 boxes of Buddhist texts, which he devoted the rest of his life to translating. The building of monasteries along the Silk Road, at Dunhuang, Yungang, and Bamiyan, helped transmit texts, people, and religious ideas through Central to East Asia.

After 1000 CE, Turks from Central Asia, who were recent converts to Islam, began to conquer new territory and expand their boundaries across the Indus River valley to parts of the northern Indian plains. The most powerful of these states was the Delhi Sultanate. Islam became firmly established politically in the north as well as in some coastal towns and parts of the Deccan Plateau, although the majority of the population of South Asia remained Hindu.

There were continual close trade relations and intellectual connections between the cultures of the Indian subcontinent and the Islamic World. To point out a concrete example of cultural transmission, teachers may have students trace the Gupta advances in astronomy and mathematics (particularly the numeral system, which included a place value of ten) to the work of al-Khwarizmi, a Persian mathematician of the ninth century, who applied the base-ten numerical system pioneered in India to the study of *algebra*, a word derived from the Arabic *al-jabr*, meaning “restoration.” As trade grew along the sea routes of the Indian Ocean, India became a major producer of cotton cloth, spices, and other commodities with a volume of exports second only to China.

## East Asia, 300–1300: China and Japan

- How did the Tang and Song Dynasties gain and maintain power over people and territories?
- How did the environmental conditions and technological innovations cause the medieval economic revolution? What were the effects of this revolution?
- Why was Quanzhou such an important site of encounter?
- How did Chinese culture, ideas and technologies, and Buddhism influence Korea and Japan?
- What influence did samurai customs and values have on the government and society of medieval Japan?

From 300 to 1300 CE, China had a larger population and economy than any other major region of the world. Students begin their study with the following question: **How did the Tang and Song Dynasties gain and maintain power over people and territories?** After a long period of disunity, the Sui (589–618) and Tang Dynasties (618–907) reunited China. The Tang rulers rebuilt a government modeled on the Han Dynasty. Scholar-officials, trained in Confucianism, advised the emperor and administered the empire. Confucian principles specified that government should operate as a strict hierarchy of authority from the emperor, who enjoyed the “Mandate of Heaven” as long as he ruled justly, down to the local village official.

The Tang had an active foreign policy and spread its influence along the Silk Road to the west, as far as the border of the Abbasid Caliphate. The two empires fought a battle in Central Asia in 751, from which the Chinese retreated. The Tang Dynasty extended influence and cultural pressure on Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

The Song Dynasty took over in 960. The Song supervised strong cultural and economic growth, with magnificent cities and cultural productions. The *Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization* Web site has visuals and interactive activities to help students analyze primary sources from the Song and other dynasties. The Song instituted an official examination system for scholar-officials, which gave China a civil service bureaucracy many centuries before any other state. China had the strongest and most centralized government in the world. However, the Song struggled militarily against nomadic tribes from the north. One group of nomads overran the Northern Song region and captured the emperor. Survivors of the Song imperial family maintained the Southern Song Empire from 1126 to 1260, when they fell to the Mongols. Under pressure from the loss of the north to “barbarians,” the Southern Song emphasized the superiority of Chinese traditions.

Despite these military problems, China became Afroeurasia’s major economic powerhouse in this period, due to the medieval economic revolution. Students analyze the following questions: **How did the environmental conditions and technological innovations cause the medieval economic revolution? What were the effects of this revolution?** Cause-and-effect graphic organizers help students analyze the many factors that contributed to the Chinese economic revolution that occurred between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. The factors of population growth, expansion of agriculture, urbanization, spread of manufacturing, and technological innovation were both causes and effects of the economic revolution, as each factor intensified the effects of the others.

The economic revolution began with the introduction (from Vietnam) of *champa* rice, a variety that produces two crops per year. Farmers migrated to the Yangzi River valley to take advantage of the increased yield, and the population grew rapidly.

Chinese laborers and merchants extended the empire’s system of canals connecting navigable rivers to about 30,000 miles. The system was financed by state taxes on trade and led to even more trade.

Blast furnaces quadrupled the output of iron and steel in the eleventh century. Availability of steel enabled increased production in other industries. Technicians experimented with gunpowder rockets and bombs. Woodblock printing became a standard industry, and printed books circulated widely.

The hundreds of inventions of the Tang and Song eras included the magnetic compass, advanced kilns for firing porcelain, and wheels for spinning silk. In the California EEI curriculum unit “Genius Across the Centuries,” 7.3.5, students research five important Chinese inventions of this period (tea, the manufacture of paper, woodblock printing, the compass, and gunpowder), examine a map of China’s natural regions, identify the sources of raw materials used in each invention, and evaluate the influence of these Chinese inventions on the natural systems of medieval China.

The teacher invites students to explore the similarity of the agricultural revolution in medieval Christendom at about the same time (ca. 1000). In both cases, improvements in farming technology led the way, and growth in trade, inventions, cities, and population resulted. Both cultures benefited from increased Afroeurasian trade as well.

Students then investigate this question: **Why did Quanzhou become such an important site of encounter?** Located on China’s southeast coast, Quanzhou was a primary destination for Arab, Persian, Indian, and Southeast Asian ships carrying merchants eager to buy China’s famed porcelain and silk. Because of its extensive internal economy and technological advances, China exported more than it imported. Although the land route to China was sometimes difficult to travel, shipping to and from the southeast coast meant that China was never isolated from the outside world. China was also the largest and most centralized state in the medieval world, and government regulations of merchants and foreigners were more thorough. As one of the official trade cities of the Chinese empire, Quanzhou had large foreign communities. In this lesson, students compare the accounts of Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo, and Zhao Rugua about Quanzhou for their multiple points of view on trade and cultural exchange. They write an essay answering the guiding question and citing evidence from the primary sources. Students analyze a concrete example of cross-cultural production in the porcelain vases and flasks made in China for export to the Muslim world and Spain.

### Grade Seven Classroom Example: Quanzhou, Site of Encounter (Integrated ELA/Literacy and World History)

In Ms. Hutton’s seventh-grade world history class, students are learning about medieval world history. They do this by touring sites of encounter, or places of exchange, in the medieval world. Quanzhou, located on China’s southeast coast, and one of the largest and busiest ports in the world, is a centerpiece in Ms. Hutton’s classroom. Students in her class have learned how Quanzhou was a prime destination for Arab, Persian, Indian, and Southeast Asian ships carrying merchants eager to buy China’s famed porcelain and silk. As one of the official trade cities of the Chinese empire (which was the largest and most centralized state in the medieval world), Quanzhou had large foreign communities.

As an important part of learning about Quanzhou as a site of encounter, students in Ms. Hutton’s class participate in a guided discussion about the city’s laws, customs, and multicultural coexistence. Students practice Common Core and ELD discussion skills based on excerpts from primary-source documents to answer this discussion question: How did laws and customs help people from different cultures live together in Quanzhou?

First, Ms. Hutton divides the class into groups of three or four. Each student in the group is asked to read one or two primary sources, write a short summary of the document, and highlight evidence that helps answer the discussion question on a graphic organizer. To support students’ interrogation of their sources, she asks them questions like, “Who benefited from this law or custom? Did the law or custom make people feel safe and welcome? Did it keep people from cheating or causing trouble?”

Ms. Hutton then directs her students to explain what they have written with their group. To support student discussion, she provides various discussion starters designed to start the conversation, such as, “My document is about . . .” “This law/custom kept people from cheating by . . .” “This law/custom helped people from different cultures live together because . . .” and “The evidence that supports my idea is . . .” She also provides starters that can be used to respond to conversation, such as, “Tell me more about . . .” “What evidence do you have?” “How did you come to that conclusion?”

**Example** *(continued)*

After all group members have shared, Ms. Hutton’s students collectively try to formulate an interpretation (or main idea) that answers the discussion question based on all the evidence. She offers additional sentence starters to support this part of the discussion, such as “Document xx does not seem to fit with the other documents, because . . .” “Document xx seems to support the ideas in document xxx . . .” “I agree/disagree with what Carmen said, because . . .” “Does the evidence about your law /custom support the interpretation that . . .” and “Where is the evidence to support this interpretation?”

After each group has formulated an interpretation, Ms. Hutton debriefs the students as a whole class using these questions to lead the discussion: “What is your interpretation, what evidence supports this interpretation, and what evidence contradicts this interpretation?” She circulates through the room during the conversations to evaluate and redirect, if necessary, her students’ ability to make an oral argument in response to the discussion question. As she listens to their conversation, Ms. Hutton considers her students’ ability to marshal relevant evidence in support of their argument, their use of academic language, and their overall understanding of the specific content in this lesson.

This example is summarized from a full unit, *Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World: Quanzhou*, available for free download, developed by the California History–Social Science Project (<http://chssp.ucdavis.edu>) as part of the History Blueprint initiative. Copyright © 2014, Regents of the University of California, Davis campus.

**CA HSS Content Standards:** 7.2.5, 7.3.4, 7.4.3, 7.8.3

**CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8):** Research, Evidence, and Point of View 5

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RH.6–8.1, 2, 9, WHST.6–8.7, 8, 9, SL.7.1, 2, 3, 4, 6

**CA ELD Standards:** ELD.PI.7.3, 6b, 9

Buddhism spread widely and gained many followers in China during the Tang period and began to alter religious life in neighboring Korea and Japan as well. Students return to the question **How did Buddhism spread and change over time?** In China, Buddhist ideas intermingled with those of Daoism, a Chinese religion emphasizing private spirituality, and Confucianism, the belief system that stressed moral and ethical behavior. At its height in the ninth century, Buddhism had 50,000 monasteries in China. As Confucian scholar-officials and Daoist priests



felt threatened by this “foreign religion,” the Tang emperors reversed their earlier acceptance of Buddhism and began to persecute it. One result of this persecution is that Buddhism did not become the official religion of China. Instead, Confucian, Daoist, and Buddhist beliefs and practices fused together in China to form a syncretic popular religion, emphasizing moral living, daily ritual, and dedication to family and community.

Students turn their attention to the following question: **How did Chinese culture, ideas and technologies, and Buddhism influence Korea and Japan?** Under the Tang Dynasty, China expanded its trade and cultural influence to Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia. At sites of encounter, these societies adopted and adapted Chinese ideas and institutions and combined those with their own ideas and institutions to build distinct civilizations. This is the adoption-and-adaptation form of cultural encounter.

In the fourth century, three kingdoms emerged to rule the Korean population; in 676, one of those kingdoms, Silla, unified the whole peninsula. Silla was closely connected to the Tang Dynasty of China. Korean elites used Chinese as a written language but later devised a phonetic script for the Korean language called *Hangul*. In 936, the Koryo kingdom took over rule in Korea and adopted a civil service exam system similar to that of China. Korean merchants were engaged in trade with Japan and China, and through those networks, to Indian Ocean and Afroeurasian trade networks as well. The Korea Society PowerPoint presentation “Silla Korea and the Silk Road” has images and archaeological evidence that provide opportunities for students to analyze cultural interaction and trade across Eurasia.

In a similar manner, Japan was influenced by China and Korea but adapted outside institutions and ideas to fit its own indigenous culture. Before the sixth century, Japan was an agricultural society ruled by land-holding clan chieftains. Their religion, Shinto, emphasized the influence of the supernatural world and spirits of the ancestors. One clan rose above the others and founded a central state and a dynasty called the Yamato. Those rulers claimed the title of “heavenly sovereign,” or emperor. About 850 CE, the Yamato rulers lost their grip on political affairs, and aristocratic palace families assumed real power. The emperors retained their throne but played mainly a ritual role. The pattern of aristocratic clans warring and succeeding one another as rulers under the sovereignty of a ceremonial but powerless emperor continued into modern times.

Between the third and sixth centuries, when China was politically fragmented, many Chinese and Koreans migrated to Japan seeking refuge or opportunity. Those newcomers introduced many innovations, including advanced metallurgy, writing, silk production, textile manufacture, papermaking, and Buddhism. Japanese tradition links the introduction of Buddhism and beginning of Chinese cultural influence with Prince Shokotu (574–622).

China's immense power under the Tang Dynasty stimulated Japanese interest in Chinese and Korean cultures. Literary scholars, officials, and Buddhist monks traveled to Japan. In turn, Japanese intellectuals went west to seek knowledge, learn Confucian statecraft, and acquire Buddhist texts, some made in Korea with some of the earliest known woodblock printing technology. The Japanese gradually adapted Buddhism to fit older Shinto practices. For example, Shinto nature gods became associated with Buddhist spirits and saints. The Zen school of Buddhism spread widely among laboring men and women.

From about 1000 CE, the Japanese aristocratic class creatively combined Chinese and Korean ideas with Japanese ways to form a new civilization with distinctive institutions, literature, and arts. Japanese officials adopted rules of government derived from imperial China but tailored them to their own smaller population and territory. Scholars developed a writing system that used simplified Chinese characters to represent Japanese sounds. Moreover, several aristocratic women wrote literary works in Japanese. Students may read selections from the *Tale of Genji*, a novel about a courtier's life written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu sometime between 990 and 1012.



Even though China had a great influence on Japan, Japanese government and society developed in its own direction. Students investigate the question **What influence did samurai customs and values have on the government and society of medieval Japan?** Japan had an emperor, but the emperor and his court had no real power. Clans continued to control regional areas of Japan. Important clans fought each other for

more land, power, and control over the weak central government. In the 1180s, the Miramoto clan dominated Japan. They instituted a military government headed by a “great general,” or *shogun*.

The highest social status in the clan and in society belonged to the *samurai*, professional fighters. Most samurai were vassals of clan leaders, or *daimyo*, in a system that was similar to feudal lordship in Christendom at the same time. Samurai were dedicated to a code of courage, honor, and martial skill. To analyze samurai culture, students read *The Tale of the Heike* and view woodblock prints. The Asia for Educators Web site has a short excerpt of this story of samurai warfare, and there are many woodblock prints on the Web, although most date from later periods.

During those centuries, Japan’s agriculture, population, and urbanization continued to expand. Exchanges with China and Korea grew, as merchants traded luxury goods in return for Japanese silver, copper, timber, and steel swords. By 1300, East Asia was an interconnected region dominated economically and culturally by China.

## The Americas, 300–1490

- How did the environment affect the expansion of agriculture, population, cities, and empires in Mesoamerica and the Andean region?
- Why did the Maya civilization, the Aztec Empire, and the Inca Empire gain power over people and territories?
- How did Mesoamerican religion develop and change over time?
- Under the Aztecs, why was Tenochtitlán a site of encounter?

To begin their study of civilizations in the Americas, students investigate the following question: **How did the environment affect the expansion of agriculture, population, cities, and empires in Mesoamerica and the Andean region?** One important environmental factor was the separation of the Americas and Afroeurasia after 15,000 BCE. As a result, different ecosystems developed in the Americas than in Afroeurasia. The Americas had no beasts of burden; corn was the major staple rather than rice or wheat.

A second environmental factor is the sheer size and variety of habitats in the Americas. The north–south axis of the Americas extends nearly 11,000 miles, from the frigid Arctic rim to the equatorial rain forests of the Amazon River basin to Tierra Del Fuego at the southern tip of South America. A mountain spine runs nearly the entire length and divides the Americas longitudinally, separating narrow coastal plains on the Pacific Ocean from broad plains on the eastern side that stretch toward the Atlantic Ocean. Several great river systems, especially the Mississippi and the Amazon, have been channels of human communication since ancient times. Thousands of different cultures, speaking many different languages and following different customs, lived on the two continents. Their ways of life varied from gathering and hunting to agrarian–urban states. Lesson two or four of the California EEI curriculum unit “Sun Gods and Jaguar Kings,” 7.7.1, guides students through the landforms and climate zones that formed the environment for the two urbanized regions of the Americas.

Agriculture developed independently in Mesoamerica and the Andean highlands after 3000 BCE. Farming and village settlement spread through those regions and by the second millennium BCE, the Olmec civilization appeared in Mesoamerica and the Chávin civilization in the central Andes. Unlike the land between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, the Nile River valley, the Huang He (Yellow) River valley, or the Indus River valley, these civilizations did not develop along great rivers.

The catalyst for developing the Olmec civilization may have been surplus farming produce, population growth, or increasing trade. Connected by exchange of crops and products from the ocean, the lowlands, the highlands, and the rain forest, the Chávin civilization extended across the high Andes range to the lowlands on either side. After the Olmec and Chavín civilizations fell, other civilizations took their place or grew up nearby. The Maya, Aztec, and Inca Empires built on the culture and accomplishments of 2,000 years of previous civilizations.

Between about 200 to 900 CE, the Maya region of southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize had more than 50 independent city-states. The students focus on this question: **Why did the Maya civilization gain power over people and territories?** The teacher points out that although the Maya built on a basis of civilizations before them, the Maya city-states as well as the city-states of other contemporary cultures in Mesoamerica built larger and grander buildings; developed advanced

writing, mathematics, and astronomy; and had a more hierarchical and wealthy society. Two factors that enabled the Maya to rise to power were rich agriculture and widespread trade. Among the largest cities were Tikal in Guatemala and Calakmul in Mexico.

Maya societies produced monumental architecture, astronomy observatories, a phonetic writing system that yielded libraries of thousands of books, and a sophisticated calendar system based on a 52-year cycle. These innovations would have given the Maya society strong cultural power, because many neighboring people would have been impressed. Students may compare mathematical systems that developed in Afroeurasia with Maya mathematics, which utilized positional notation, the concept of zero, and a base-20 numerical system.

The monarchs and aristocratic families who ruled these city-states kept order and defended their lands in wars with other city-states. They also performed elaborate religious rituals to conciliate the gods who, Mayans believed, commanded the rain and sun. These rituals included bloodletting by members of the elite and royal families. The elites drew blood from their own bodies to offer to the gods. The Maya also sacrificed enemies captured in battle (instead of killing them on the battlefield). Farmers, artisans, and hunters paid taxes and supplied labor for construction of public temples, palaces, and ceremonial ball courts.

After about 750 CE, the Maya area experienced a period of intensified warfare among city-states, monumental construction diminished, and many Maya cities were abandoned while new ones emerged as new centers of power. Deforestation, erosion, and drought may have contributed to the period of turmoil.

The Aztec Empire emerged in the fifteenth century. Initially, students focus on the following question: **Why did the Aztec Empire gain power over people and territories?** The Aztecs, a people who originally migrated from northern Mexico, owed a strong cultural debt to the Maya, Teotihuacán, and the Toltec cities in Mesoamerica. The Aztecs won their power by warfare. They unified much of central Mexico by defeating all other powerful cities and states. They created a state based on ingenious methods of farming, collection of tribute from conquered peoples, and an extensive network of markets and trade routes.

Next, students investigate the question **How did Mesoamerican religion change over time?** The Aztec practiced ritual sacrifice of war captives, but to a

greater extent than the Maya had. The Aztecs believed that the god of the sun would stop shining and the universe would collapse without a constant supply of human hearts and blood. Comparing Maya and Aztec practices shows students how the Mesoamerican religion changed over time. Students may analyze visuals from Aztec tribute records, the *Florentine Codex*, and other codices made in the early Spanish period. Lesson five of the California EEI curriculum unit “Sun Gods and Jaguar Kings,” 7.7.1, has an activity based on the Aztec tribute records as sources. Ultimately, the resentment of conquered people made the Aztec Empire unstable.

Students also study the question **Under the Aztecs, why was Tenochtitlán a site of encounter?** This is the first part of their study, as they will return to Mexico City as a site of encounter in the Global Convergence unit. Tenochtitlán was built on an island in Lake Texcoco, with three causeways linking it to the mainland. The city was built in circles, with temples and government buildings in an inner square, houses in the outer circles, and floating garden beds on the lake around the city. It was one of the largest cities in the world at that time. Its markets contained vast amounts of a variety of goods from all over Mesoamerica.

Students compare the Aztec Empire with the Inca state that arose in Andean South America by answering the question **Why did the Inca Empire gain power over people and territories?** Like the Aztecs, the Incas built on a series of earlier civilizations, but combined cities and states together into a larger empire than any before in that region. The Inca rulers built a highly centralized political system that included methods of food distribution in times of poor harvests. They also created a network of about 25,000 miles of government-controlled roads that ran along the Andes spine and served military, administrative, and commercial purposes. The Incas did rely on military power, but they also offered important social benefits to the population. In contrast to the Maya, the Incas did not have a writing system, but they used Andean *quipus* (sometimes spelled *khipus*), or sets of colored and knotted strings, to keep complex records. To conclude this unit, teachers may have students meet in groups and prepare graphic organizers comparing power, religion, social customs, agriculture, intellectual developments, and trade in each culture.

## West Africa, 900–1400

- How did the environment affect the development and expansion of the Ghana and Mali Empires and the trade networks that connected them to the rest of Afroeurasia?
- Why was Mali a site of encounter? What were the effects of the exchanges at Mali?
- How did Arab/North African and West African perspectives differ on West African kingdoms?

As of 500 CE, groups of farming and animal-herding peoples lived in West Africa, a region with four large zones of climate and vegetation running west to east. Students begin with the question **How did the environment affect the development and expansion of the Ghana and Mali Empires and the trade networks that connected them to the rest of Afroeurasia?** The most northerly belt is the intensely arid Sahara, home to oasis-dwellers and pastoral nomads. Just south of the desert is the semiarid Sahel zone, where cattle and camel herding predominated. Third is the tropical grassland, or *savanna*, which had sufficient rainfall to support farmers and their fields of rice, sorghum, and millet. In the far south is the wet tropical forest. There, settled life depended on cultivation of root crops and other forest foods. In the Sahel and savanna, agriculture and herding supported the growth of regional trade. Tracing a great arc across West Africa, the Niger River provided a natural highway of communication linking different ecological zones. Farming, trade, and early development of iron smelting stimulated town building. The city of Jenne-jeno, built in the early centuries CE, was home to artisans who produced iron tools, copperware, gold jewelry, and fine painted ceramics.

In addition to local markets, West Africa contained rich deposits of gold. Both Muslim and Christian rulers and traders in the Mediterranean region craved African gold, notably for coinage. West African merchants acquired gold from mines in the Sudan and shipped it to towns in the Sahel, where Arab and Berber merchants carried the gold north on trans-Saharan camel caravan routes. Some of this African bullion then flowed into Europe or eastward toward India.

Students use the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World interactive map to

investigate these environmental factors. Then they read Ibn Battuta’s account of the perilous crossing of the Sahara in an excerpt from the Mali lesson of the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World unit. They read the text individually first, then meet in groups to discuss and report on one paragraph of the reading, and finally read the text again and answer text-dependent questions.

The centralized state of Ghana emerged around the eighth century in the western part of the Sahel zone. The king of Ghana commanded a large royal household, a hierarchy of officials, and an army of infantry archers. The Ghana Empire had Muslim officials, though the kings probably did not convert.

Ghana slowly crumbled in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but around 1240, Mali emerged to rule over a large part of the western Sudan. Mali’s rulers accumulated wealth by collecting tribute from African farmers and taxing trans-Saharan trade. The royal court employed staffs of both foreign and native-born Muslims as administrators, and Arabic became the written language of government and diplomacy. Most of the kings and their officials professed Islam and introduced Islamic law, though most of West Africa’s population adhered to their local religions for several more centuries. Timbuktu, a city near the Niger River, rose in the 1300s as a regional center of trade and Islamic learning.

The gold trade across the Sahara involved Ghana and Mali in Afroeurasian trade networks. Students focus on Mali with the questions **Why was Mali a site of encounter? What were the effects of the exchanges at Mali?** Northbound caravans also shipped ivory, ostrich feathers, and slaves captured in raids and wars. Merchants marched these captives, including many women, to the Mediterranean region or Middle East principally to serve in Muslim households. The southbound trade included salt from Saharan mines, a commodity with huge demand in West Africa. Other southbound commodities included copper, horses, and Arabic books. Arabic- and Berber-speaking merchants from North Africa likely introduced Islam to West Africa in the eighth century. They established bonds with Sudanic traders, many of whom converted to the new faith.

Even for those Africans who did not convert to Islam, Muslim culture had a significant impact on West African architecture, education, and languages. The “Sightseeing in Mali” gallery walk activity (from the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World curriculum) guides students through an analysis of artifacts from



Mali, such as mosques, statues of mounted warriors, an astronomy book, and the university at Timbuktu. The artifacts show that the West Africans adopted Muslim culture but also adapted it to fit their own culture.

In order to probe more deeply into the history of West African kingdoms, students analyze this question: **How did Arab/North African and West African perspectives differ on West African kingdoms?** The “West African and Arab/North African Perspectives” activity contains excerpts from Arab/North African sources by al-Bakri, al-Umari, Ibn Khaldun, and Ibn Battuta, and one West African source—*The Epic of Sundiata*. All of the written sources about the West African kingdoms were written by Arab/North African writers, who thought that West African culture was more primitive than Arab culture. If the historian relies on their evidence alone, he or she would think that Islam and the gold trade were almost the creators of West African states.

Students access a West African perspective in the *Epic of Sundiata (Sunjata)*, a heroic king associated with the rise of Mali. The epic was passed down by *griots* (storytellers) in an oral tradition until the mid-twentieth century, when one version of it was recorded in writing. In the close-reading activity, students learn how to identify perspective as they compare passages. At the conclusion of this lesson, students work with the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World map to analyze the position of Mali in the Islamic world. They compare that position at the end of a single trade route and within a single trade circle with Cairo’s position at the center of many trade routes and three trade circles. A brief discussion on the differences between the cultural center and the periphery will introduce students to this geographic concept.

## Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World, 1150–1490

- How did the Mongol Empire destroy states and increase the interconnection of Afroeurasia?
- What were the effects of the exchanges at Majorca and Calicut?
- How did increasing interconnection and trade, competition between states (and their people), and technological innovations lead to voyages of exploration?

Around the year 1000 in Afroeurasia, technological innovations in agriculture caused massive increases in productivity, population growth, settlement of new lands, and a great expansion of manufacturing, trade, and urbanization. The agricultural revolution between the Tang and Song Dynasties made China the center of industry, as it produced new inventions and luxury products desired throughout Afroeurasia. Innovations spurred a huge expansion of agriculture in Europe, cultivation of new lands, expansion of trade, and a rebirth of manufacturing, trade, urban culture, and education. Networks of commercial, technological and cultural exchange covered most of Afroeurasia. In the center, the Muslim world (now divided into many states) and India prospered as producers of goods such as cotton cloth, spices, and swords, and also as middlemen along the east–west trade routes. Although people rarely traveled from Spain to China, products, technologies, and ideas did. From 1200 to 1490, those networks grew stronger, busier, and tighter.

The attacks and domination of the Mongol Empire had a huge negative effect on states, empires, and many people of Eurasia, but it also greatly extended trade, travel, and exchange between Afroeurasian societies. The teacher introduces the question **How did the Mongol Empire destroy states and increase the interconnection of Afroeurasia?** In the late twelfth century, nomadic warriors from the steppe and deserts north of China, the Mongol tribes (and other Central Asian nomadic tribes), were united by a charismatic leader, Chinggis (Genghis) Khan, who led them to conquests across Eurasia.

At its height, the Mongol Empire was the largest land empire in world history. Even though their numbers were small, Mongols were fierce and highly mobile fighters who terrified the people they conquered. Students examine maps of the Mongol Empire and conquests and compare these with the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World interactive map, which has physical, religious, political, and other maps of Afroeurasia. After Chinggis Khan’s death, the Mongol Empire split up into four khanates. Chinggis’ grandson, Hulagu Khan, was ruler of the Il-Khanate. Since the Muslim states were divided, individually they were no match for the Mongol warriors. Hulagu conquered Persia, Syria, and part of Anatolia and destroyed the Abbasid Caliphate’s capital of Baghdad.

Although some feared that the Mongols would destroy the Muslim world, the Egyptian Mamluk Sultanate fought the Mongol army and stopped its advance.

Mongols in the Khanate of the Golden Horde overran Russia and attacked Poland and Eastern Europe. The Khanate of the Great Khan went to another grandson, Kubilai Khan, who took over China from the Song Dynasty. Kubilai established the Yuan Dynasty and kept many Chinese customs, but he replaced Confucian scholar-officials with foreign administrators. The Mongols conquered states in Southeast Asia and tried twice to invade Japan in the late thirteenth century, but they failed both times. The domination of the Mongols did not last long; by 100 years after the conquest, three of the four Mongol khanates had fallen from power.

Although the Mongols killed many people and destroyed many cities after a conquest, the Mongols tolerated all religions and protected and promoted trade across Eurasia. Under their protection, the land trade route from China to the Mediterranean re-opened and trade boomed. The Mongols also moved people around throughout their empire, using, for example, Persian and Arab administrators in China, and facilitating the journey of Marco Polo (and many other less-famous people) from Venice to China. The increase in interaction also spread Chinese technologies and ideas into the Muslim and Christian worlds. To understand both the negative and positive effects of the Mongol conquest and empire, student groups do a gallery walk with visuals of a Mongol passport, hunting scroll, gold textile, and a Persian tile with Chinese motifs, and an excerpt from Marco Polo describing the Mongol postal service. Students cite evidence from each primary source on a source analysis template to answer the question **How did the Mongol Empire increase the interconnection of Afroeurasia?**

After the Mongol khanates fell, new states and empires arose. As the Il-Khanate declined, Turkish kingdoms replaced the Mongols. These Turkish warriors originally came from Central Asia and spread into the Muslim world after their conversion to Islam. Combining dedication to religious ideas with the mounted warrior tradition of Central Asia, they took over the settled Muslim lands. In the west, Turkish armies took over most of Anatolia from the Byzantine Empire (a conquest that set off the Crusades). One of the Turkish leaders, Osman, created the Ottoman Empire in 1326. He and his successors conquered all of Anatolia, Greece, and most of the Balkan Peninsula in eastern Europe, before conquering Constantinople in 1453 and bringing the Byzantine Empire to an end. Other Turkish dynasties took over Persia under Safavid rule and parts of the Indian subcontinent under Mughal rule. In China, the native Ming Dynasty

removed the Mongols and returned the administration of China's government to Confucian scholar-officials.

In the remainder of this unit, students will engage with this question: **How did increasing interconnection and trade, competition between states (and their people), and technological innovations lead to voyages of exploration?** Most states and empires supported trade as the rulers and elite groups wanted access to products such as silk from China, Persia, Syria, and Egypt; spices from South and Southeast Asia; cotton cloth from India and Egypt; and gold from West Africa. Kings and their officials also realized that trade made their states strong and increased their tax income. Some used their military power to take over trade centers that belonged to other states or to dominate trade routes.

As trade connections, imperial expansion, and travel increased in Afroeurasia, both conflict and cooperation occurred at sites of encounter. Competition between states for land and resources and between the followers of different religions made many encounters violent. At the same time, people from different cultures found ways to cooperate so that they could trade and coexist.

Of the major regions of Afroeurasia, medieval Christendom had one of the least-developed but also one of the fastest-growing economies. There were few European products that people in Asia and Africa wanted to buy, but there was a large and growing market in Europe for Asian spices, cloth, porcelain, and other goods. Europe had to export silver and gold to pay for these goods. Most of the silver ended up in China. Between about 1000 and 1300 CE, the ships and traders from Venice and Genoa rose to dominate long-distance commerce to Europe from Cairo and other Muslim trade cities in Southwestern Asia and North Africa.

During the same time period, certain states of Western Christendom, notably England, France, Castile, and Aragon, grew stronger and more centralized. The kings of Castile, Aragon, and other Christian kingdoms of Iberia fought against Muslim kingdoms of al-Andalus for both religious and political reasons. As a case study of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish interaction in medieval Iberia, students analyze the site of encounter—Majorca—with the following question: **What were the effects of the exchanges at Majorca?** King James I of Aragon conquered this island off the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula from its Muslim Almohad rulers in 1229. Students read excerpts from King James's *Autobiography* in a

guided activity that teaches them how to cite evidence. They learn that he was motivated in part by Majorca's position as a trading and shipping center for the western Mediterranean and the Maghribi ports, which controlled the gold trade from Mali. Catalan merchants urged King James to take over Majorca because they wanted to gain access to those markets.

On the Majorcan base and elsewhere in Iberia, Catalans, Genoese, Iberian Jews, Iberian Muslims (Moors), and Portuguese developed maps, such as the Catalan Atlas, ships, and navigational technology that gave Mediterranean shippers access to the Atlantic Ocean. The Catalan Atlas reproductions that are online allow students to closely examine this early map of Afroeurasia to identify its improved features, such as accurate coastlines and a compass rose. In a gallery walk, they analyze objects such as the lateen sail and the astrolabe (adopted from the Islamic world), the compass (invented in China), and visuals of medieval ships to identify the technological improvements. These examples demonstrate the synthesis of creative energies that a site of encounter often produces.

Using this technology, Catalans and Portuguese began exploring the African coast (looking for a different route to the goldfields of West Africa). However, the Iberian Christian kingdoms' increasing intolerance of Jews and Muslims ended that multicultural society by 1500. Jews, a large portion of the Spanish population, were forced to convert to Catholicism or flee Spain in 1492; Muslim converts were expelled in 1609.

In the "Investigative Reporting on Intolerance," student groups read excerpts from al-Idrisi, Benjamin of Tudela, Ramon Llull, or King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. Then the student group designs and acts out an investigative report (as for TV news or a cell phone I-Report). Each student in the group plays a role in the report, which may be videotaped, recorded on a cell phone, or acted out live. All reports are shown to the class, and students record specific information and evidence on a chart. The teacher concludes by pointing out that England, France, and other states also persecuted and expelled Jews in this period. Fleeing persecution, many European Jews migrated to Poland, where the government gave them security and rights, to Russia, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

Next, the students switch to a site of encounter in India, Calicut, a major trade center of the Indian Ocean trading network. As they explore the question **What**

**were the effects of the exchanges at Calicut?**, students learn about both the fifteenth-century Indian Ocean trade and the advent of the Portuguese in 1498. In the “What’s So Hot about Spices?” activity, students examine written and visual primary sources about popular spices, where they were grown, and how they were used as flavorings, medicines, and perfumes. Using the Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World map, students study the Indian Ocean monsoon patterns and tables of medieval sailing seasons to determine the effects on ships, merchants, and sailors.

Ships from many states visited Calicut, including Chinese junks and the huge fleets led by Admiral Zheng He. Between 1405 and 1433, the Ming emperor sent out enormous fleets of hundreds of ships on seven major voyages to trade and collect tribute in the Indian Ocean, advancing as far west as the Red Sea and East Africa. Although the Ming emperors did not send out any more naval fleets after 1433, trade continued.

In the “Analyzing Perspectives on Calicut and Trade” group activity, students read primary sources written by Arab travelers, Jewish merchants, Persian ambassadors, Chinese officers and explorers, and Portuguese explorers. Each group member chooses an equal share of the sources, which he or she reads aloud to the group and then guides a discussion, as everyone else fills out a source analysis chart.

Students use the evidence to write an essay on the question **What were the effects of the exchanges at Calicut?** The lesson has the writing prompt, instructions for evidence use, an effects organization chart, an evidence-analysis chart, an essay frame, and a grading rubric. The teacher selects from these resources the ones that will best support English learners and struggling writers.

To conclude, the teacher returns to the central question: **How did increasing interconnection and trade, competition between states (and their people), and technological innovations lead to voyages of exploration?** He or she asks students to identify examples of each of these causes from Majorca and Calicut. Comparison of the voyages of Zheng He with those of Columbus and/or Da Gama makes a good transition to the next unit.

## Global Convergence, 1450–1750

- What impact did human expansion in the voyages of exploration have on the environment, trade networks, and global interconnection?
- What were the causes of colonialism? What were the effects of colonialism on the colonized people?
- What were the effects of exchanges at Tenochtitlán/Mexico City in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries?
- Was slavery always racial?
- How did the gunpowder empires (Ming/Manchu China, Mughal India, Safavid Persia, Ottoman Empire, Russia, Spain, later France and England) extend their power over people and territories?

This unit begins with the question **What impact did human expansion in the voyages of exploration have on the environment, trade networks, and global interconnection?** In the last unit, students investigated the state of Afroeurasian trade and power before the voyages of exploration and the technological developments in ships and navigation that enabled the European voyages. They examined the Chinese voyages of exploration led by Zheng He and the initial Portuguese voyages around Africa to India and Calicut. Now they turn to the Spanish and Portuguese voyages across the Atlantic begun by Columbus. As a result of these voyages, new oceanic routes connected nearly every inhabited part of the world. The early modern period witnessed greater global connection and exchange, as European conquests and encounters in the Americas linked both hemispheres in significant ways.

People, plants, and animals were introduced to places where they had previously been unknown. This “Columbian Exchange” led to profound changes in economies, diets, social organization, and, in the Americas, to a massive devastation of Native American populations because of exposure to new disease microorganisms originating in Afroeurasia. The Columbian Exchange marks the important biological exchange of disease, flora, and fauna between both hemispheres.

Students investigate the transfers of American crops such as maize, potatoes, and manioc to Afroeurasia, as well as addictive substances such as tobacco and

chocolate. From Afroeurasia, the Americas acquired horses, cows, pigs, and sheep. Introduction of new staple crops helped increase the population in much of Afroeurasia, and the imported animals and plants transformed the landscapes of the Americas. The Columbian Exchange also occurred across the Pacific Ocean: American crops transplanted to China grew the Chinese economy, while the chili pepper sent to Southeast Asia affected food preparation, the economy, and culture.

The diffusion of Afroeurasian diseases to the Americas had catastrophic demographic consequences. The mortality of as much as 90 percent of the Native American population allowed European newcomers to conquer territories in the Americas. Migration by Europeans and forced migration of Africans to the Americas led to a radically different population mix and the emergence of new hybrid populations and cultures. Africans who were enslaved and forced to migrate outnumbered Europeans in the Americas until the nineteenth century. The loss of so many people caused severe economic and demographic disruption in tropical Africa. The effects of the Columbian Exchange were profound environmental change and huge human population shifts.

European voyages to the Americas and the Indian Ocean transformed world trade networks. The Spanish extracted precious metals, gold, and especially silver, while the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English extracted raw materials, such as lumber and furs, from their American colonies and shipped them to Afroeurasia. Europeans set up plantations to grow cash crops that were exported to Afroeurasia. The result was a massive influx of wealth into Europe.

However, Asia remained the world's most productive center of agriculture and manufacturing until near the end of this era. Chinese products were so highly desired in the European market that a substantial portion of the silver taken from the New World ended up in China as payment for Chinese products exported to Europe. European states and merchants also took over the shipping of products around the world's oceans and seas, gradually replacing the merchant fleets of other regions. These European states frequently battled with each other to dominate shipping routes, trade cities, and lands with desirable resources.

The Portuguese battled Indian, Arab, and Southeast Asian shippers in the Indian Ocean, but the Portuguese themselves were soon attacked and replaced by the Dutch, who took over the spice islands of Southeast Asia. French and English



fleets and pirates battled Spanish fleets in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Ocean trade expanded and became more militarized as the Europeans took over shipping. Students analyze maps to see how the more important voyages of exploration led to the development of global trading patterns and the location of European colonies by 1750.

Next, students investigate the following questions: **What were the causes of colonialism? What were the effects of colonialism on the colonized people?** It is important for students to recognize that the Europeans did not take over China, India, Africa, and most of Asia until the nineteenth century. For this entire period, therefore, the major Afroeurasian centers—China, India, and the Islamic World—were too strong for Europeans to conquer. In lands where states were not as strong, Europeans established colonies. European armies used gunpowder weapons to defeat local resistance. Europeans became the government rulers and officials and changed the laws. They also took desirable land away from the native owners and gave it to Europeans. Often the Europeans used the land to grow tropical commercial crops for sale in Afroeurasia. Sometimes the European government and army forced the native people to work for the Europeans as well.

Finally, European Christian missionaries spread through the colonies, trying to convert local people to Christianity. Some states, such as Spain and Portugal, supported these missionaries and helped to force local people to change their religion; other states, such as the Netherlands, did not pay much attention to missionary activities. The teacher uses a guided discussion format to address the question **Why did the Europeans use colonialism to interact with Native Americans and some Southeast Asians?** Students brainstorm possible motives of Europeans and weigh the relative importance of power, wealth, competition with other European states, and religion, using a discussion guide with sentence starters modeling academic language. As a group, students rank the possible motives and explain their reasons, and each student individually writes a one-sentence interpretation (argument or claim) answering the question. The teacher emphasizes that although many states had conquered sites of encounter in the past, colonialism was a new form of interaction between cultures that was unequal and exploitative.

In addition to conquering areas where there were divisions among many states, such as Sumatra, Java, Malaysia, and the Philippines, or where there were no states,

such as the Caribbean islands, Spanish conquerors took over both the Aztec and Inca empires in the early sixteenth century. Students assess explanations of historians for defeat of those empires at the hands of small numbers of Europeans.

Two key factors aided European military efforts. The first was the introduction of infectious diseases, such as smallpox and measles, which were endemic in Africa and Eurasia, but against which American Indian populations lacked even partial immunities. These diseases began to ravage societies in both North and South America shortly after the Spanish invasions got underway. The second factor was Spanish success at allying with local groups, notably the Tlaxcalans, who wished to free themselves from Aztec rule. In the California EEI curriculum unit “Broken Jade and Tarnished Gold,” 7.7.3, students learn that the Spanish needed the natural resources of the region, with a goal of sustaining their own economic and political systems in the “Old World.” They explore many human social factors, including greed, religious fervor, and disease, that left the Spanish in control of vast lands in Central and South America, eventually propelling the empire to expand into the lands to the north, including California.

#### Grade Seven Classroom Example: The Spanish Conquest of Mexico

To assess the impact of the Spanish conquest, Mr. Brown’s students return to the question **What were effects of exchanges at Tenochtitlán/Mexico City in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries?** The students begin by analyzing images of the conquest and interactions between Spanish and Aztecs/Mexica, which can be found in the image exercises in the “Conquest of Mexico” materials at the American Historical Association’s *Teaching and Learning in a Digital Age* Web site.

After Mr. Brown explains how to analyze perspective or point of view, student pairs research the source of the images and identify evidence of exchanges, effects of exchanges, and perspective. As they share their evidence, Mr. Brown guides and refines their understanding of perspective or point of view. Next they engage in a close reading of excerpts from accounts of the conquest and its early impact from the Letters of Cortés, the *True History* of Díaz del Castillo, *Broken Spears*, the *Florentine Codex*, and the *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* by De Las Casas. (Excerpts in English and Spanish from all of these works are readily available on the Web, except for

**Example** *(continued)*

*Broken Spears*, a collection of Aztec writings about the conquest that was originally written in Nahuatl and recently edited and translated into English.)

Sometimes Mr. Brown has all students read every document; other times he divides the documents between student groups. (The most effective division would have students read one Spanish account and one Aztec account that addressed the same event or topic.)

Each student reads the document individually at first and then discusses the question **What is this reading about?** with a partner. In the second reading, students fill out a sentence deconstruction chart that breaks down the most crucial sentence or sentences of the text, complete a worksheet that helps them identify unfamiliar vocabulary in context, and then answer text-dependent questions. For the third reading, the students mark up and annotate the text, using cognitive markers (for exchanges, effects of exchanges, loaded words, evidence of perspective or point of view, questions).

After reading all the documents, students meet in groups, identify the exchanges and effects of exchanges, and cite evidence for each on an effects analysis graphic organizer. As Mr. Brown displays the graphic organizer of several groups on the document projector, he helps students group together common exchanges, state their points in academic language, and understand any unclear points. Students investigate examples of the hybrid nature of Colonial Latin America and assess the contributions of native peoples to the cultural, economic, and social practices of the region by 1750. (Two concrete examples of this are the building of the Mexico City cathedral on the location of the central pyramid, as well as other changes to the spatial geography of Mexico City, and the Virgin of Guadalupe. Seventeenth-century Dutch, English, and French conquest and colonization in the Caribbean and North America are introduced and can be compared with developments in Latin America.)

**CA HSS Content Standards:** 7.7.3, 7.11.2

**CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8):** Chronological and Spatial Thinking 3, Research, Evidence, and Point of View 5

**CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy:** RH.6–8.1, 2, SL.7.1, 4, L4a

**CA ELD Standards:** ELD.PI.7.1, 6a, 6b, 12a; ELD.P.II.7.12a

Next, students investigate the transport of African slaves to the Americas and the creation of racialized slavery with the following question: **Was slavery always racial?** The teacher refers to examples of slavery in the ancient and medieval world, such as Rome, where slaves belonged to all ethnic groups and were usually captives in war. In the medieval Mediterranean, Christians and Muslims enslaved captives who did not belong to their own religions. However, slavery was not necessarily for life, and the children of slaves were not always slaves themselves.

In the Americas and what the trade circuit scholars call the “Atlantic World,” European slave-traders imported kidnapped Africans to work on plantations and mines in response to shortages of labor in the Americas. Since relatively few Europeans wished to migrate to the Americas to perform grueling labor in tropical climates, European planters and mine operators turned to western Africa to acquire large numbers of enslaved men and women and thereby have the labor for large-scale capitalist enterprises in the Americas.

Teachers may also highlight the role played by African leaders, such as Queen Nzinga from Angola, in this increasingly global exchange. In the Americas, slavery became racialized, and Europeans began to cultivate the idea that Africans were lesser people who were supposed to be enslaved. Students analyze visuals of the Middle Passage and maps of the Atlantic World trade routes and the numbers of slaves who were transported to the Caribbean and Brazil, which vastly outnumbered those who were transported to the 13 colonies. Attention to these points will prepare students for studying colonial economies and slavery in grade eight. Africans took part in the world economy in ways that profited rulers and traders but caused misery for millions. The forced removal of millions of people also had severe economic and demographic consequences in tropical Africa.

The final question of this unit is **How did the gunpowder empires (Ming/Manchu China, Mughal India, Safavid Persia, Ottoman Empire, Russia, Spain, later France and England) extend their power over people and territories?** Wide-scale use of gunpowder technology—cannon and firearms—transformed warfare and armies. Since these weapons were so expensive, only states could afford them. Gunpowder technology revolutionized warfare and enabled the power of the central state or empire to expand greatly. With firearms, state armies could dominate internal rivals and decimate larger armies that had no firearms. As a result, some states built large gunpowder empires by using the power of the new

technology. These gunpowder empires, which included Spain, Russia, Ming China, the Mughal Empire in India, the Safavids in Persia, and the Ottoman Empire, were able to dominate weaker polities and expand their territories.

In England, France, Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate, and many other smaller states, rulers used the power of their armies to deprive feudal lords of their local power and centralize authority in their own hands. As a result, states became more centralized and governments grew stronger. Gunpowder empires and states used their armies to attack other states as well. For example, in the sixteenth century, Ottoman armies attacked the Austrian Empire, Hungary, and Poland. French and English armies and navies fought wars against the Spanish and Austrian Habsburg empires.

## The Impact of Ideas, 1500–1750

- How did the Reformation divide the Christian Church, millions of people, and European states?
- How did world religions change and spread during the early modern period?
- What were the effects of the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution?
- Why were natural rights, the social contract, and other ideas of the Enlightenment revolutionary?

This unit investigates religious, cultural, and intellectual changes in the period from 1500 to 1750. Students see the impact of new information flowing into Europe from the “discoveries” in the Americas as a more critical factor in reshaping European thought than the cultural movement of the Renaissance. While the Reformation was a critically important development in Christianity, other world religions continued to change and spread in this period as well. To reflect this new historiography, this unit focuses on two strands—religion and cultural and intellectual developments—both in the world context. Rewriting of this unit also addresses the problem of teaching abstract concepts to seventh-graders in May and June. It streamlines the content to focus on the most important developments and recommends activities that will engage students as well as challenge them.

To introduce the Reformation, the teacher reminds students that there was only one Church in Western Europe, headed by the Pope in Rome, but that there were other Christian churches elsewhere, such as the Orthodox churches. In the 1500s, Roman Christianity split into multiple denominations. Students will focus on the question **How did the Reformation divide the Christian Church, millions of people, and European states?** By the early sixteenth century, criticism of the clerical and institutional practices of the Catholic Church (e.g., the selling of indulgences and corruption by the clergy) was extensive. Martin Luther not only criticized these practices, but also fundamental doctrines such as the validity of five of the seven sacraments and the need for clergy and for good works to achieve salvation. He created a new theology in which Christian religious practice was guided strictly by knowledge from the Bible alone and salvation was justified by “faith alone.” Students can analyze Martin Luther’s account of his tower experience, using the excerpt, sentence deconstruction chart, and analysis chart on the Blueprint for History blogpost “Martin Luther Primary Source and CCSS Activity.”

A generation later, John Calvin argued for *predestination*, whereby those elected by God were certain of salvation. The distinctions between Lutheranism and Calvinism were significant and led to many separate denominations within Protestantism. Students examine a diagram showing how modern Christian churches descended from these original splits in Protestantism. The Catholic Reformation, in response to Protestantism, transformed the Roman Church as well, especially in its practices. All churches stressed education, understanding of doctrine, and social discipline for laypeople.

The Reformation had dramatic effects on European people. All of the new denominations, Catholic and Protestant, were intolerant of each other and would not allow believers from another denomination to coexist with their believers. Mobs of ordinary people sometimes fought over religious differences. The rulers of states chose one denomination and required all the people living in the state to belong to that denomination. For example, if Calvinists found themselves living in a Lutheran state, they had to either hide their belief or move to another country. The threat of Protestantism added more fuel to the already growing religious persecution in Spain, which had expelled the Jews in 1492. Between 1500 and 1614, Spain expelled all Muslims and persecuted converts and dissenters in the Spanish Inquisition.

Spanish identity became associated with Roman Catholic belief and a strong sense of the Spanish mission to protect and spread Catholicism. This zeal showed also in the strenuous and successful efforts of the Spanish to convert the local people in their Latin American colonies and the Philippines. Protestant states were also intolerant and executed Catholics and members of other Protestant denominations. In addition, state authorities executed 50,000 people, three-fourths of them women, as witches who had sworn loyalty to the devil.

Whereas the Catholic Church insisted that priests and nuns remain celibate (unmarried), the new Protestant churches permitted their clergy to marry. In a few radical Protestant sects, women sometimes became leaders in church organization and propagation. However, male clergy, both Catholic and Protestant, generally agreed that even though men and women are equal in the sight of God, women should bow to the will of their fathers and husbands in religious and intellectual matters.

Religious differences shaped European divisions for the rest of the early modern era. Most of northwestern Europe—such as England, the Netherlands, the northern German lands, and Scandinavia—became Protestant, while most of southwestern Europe, such as France, Spain, the southern German lands, and Italy, remained loyal to Rome. Religious differences led to wars between Spain and England, the revolt of the Netherlands, the Huguenot civil wars in France, and the Thirty Years War in Germany, which ended in 1648. By that time, after 150 years

of religious warfare, many Europeans were calling for religious tolerance to bring an end to religious violence.

Students now turn to the question **How did world religions change and spread during the early modern period?** The expansion of global communications facilitated the further expansion of major world religions, notably Christianity in the Americas

and Southeast Asia, Islam around the Indian Ocean rim, and Theravada Buddhism from Sri Lanka to Southeast Asia. The Christian Reformation played a significant role in motivating colonization of the Americas. European missionaries, especially



Catholic missionary orders, spread reformed Christianity in Africa and Asia during the early modern period.

A new world religion, Sikhism, was founded in 1469 in South Asia. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, a social reformer who challenged the authority of the Brahmins and the caste order. Students learn about the Sikh Scripture (*Guru Granth Sahib*), articles of faith, the turban, and Sikh history. Guru Nanak taught that all human beings are equal and can realize the divine within them without any human intermediaries or priests. Sikhs believe that each individual can realize the divine on his or her own through devotion to God, truthful living, and service to humanity. The three basic principles of Sikhism are honest living, sharing with the needy, and praying to one God.

With the addition of Sikhism, there were now four major religions of indigenous origin. While relations between people of different religions were often peaceful, generally, most Muslim rulers persecuted Sikhs as well as Hindus and Jains. Other Mughal rulers, most notably Akbar, encouraged and accelerated the blending of Hindu and Islamic beliefs as well as architectural and artistic forms.

Religious enthusiasm and challenge to orthodoxy in the early modern period were not unique to Europe. In China, the philosopher Wang Yangming (1472–1529) initiated a reform of neo-Confucian teaching and practice, which he found dogmatic and snobbish. He argued that ordinary women and men have the capacity to lead honest lives and know good from evil without learning Confucian texts and performing ceremonies. In Iran, the Safavid Dynasty gave support to the Shi'a branch of Islam, thereby challenging Sunni authority. For another example of adoption and adaptation, students may analyze art and texts from Java to see how the journey of nine Sufi saints led to a synthesis of local animism, Hinduism, and Islam.

On a global scale, religious change in the early modern period tended to promote more personal forms of practice at the expense of the power of entrenched religious institutions and clerics. Religions continued to spread as people sought ways to understand the changes happening around them.

The teacher makes the transition to the question **What were the effects of the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution?** by telling students that they will study next the development and spread of other sets of ideas besides religious ones. The



Renaissance was a cultural and intellectual movement that began in the Italian city-states in the mid-fourteenth century and spread across Europe by the sixteenth century.

The Italian Peninsula witnessed significant urbanization and the formation of prosperous independent city-states such as Venice, Genoa, Florence, and Milan. With wealth generated from trade and industry and inspiration from the commercial and political rivalry with one another, these city-states experienced a remarkable burst of creativity that produced the artistic and literary advances of the Renaissance.

Through extensive contact with Byzantine and Islamic scholars, a considerable body of Greco–Roman knowledge was rediscovered. This revival of classical learning was named *humanism*. Humanists studied history, moral philosophy, poetry, rhetoric, and grammar—subjects they thought should be the key elements of an enlightened education. Humanism facilitated considerable achievements in literature, such as the works of Dante Alighieri, Machiavelli, and William Shakespeare, and in the arts, such the painting and sculpture of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo di Buonarroti Simoni.

Students investigate artistic techniques of the Renaissance, such as perspective and realistic portraits, and architectural masterpieces, such as the Sistine Chapel. After 1455, the printing press, using movable metal type, and the availability of manufactured paper disseminated humanism and Italian Renaissance learning to other parts of Europe and beyond. In Northern Europe, humanist interest in the origin and development of languages inspired the creation of new and more exacting Greek and Latin versions of the New Testament as well as vernacular translations of the Bible. This emphasis on exact reading of the Christian scriptures was an important influence upon early Protestant thinkers.

Humanism played a continuing role in advancing science, mathematics, and engineering techniques, as well as the understanding of human anatomy and astronomy. Discoveries led to a Scientific Revolution in early modern Europe. The long-term origins of the Scientific Revolution were rooted in the historical connections with Greco–Roman rationalism; Jewish, Christian, and Muslim science; and Renaissance humanism.

European exploration and colonization in this period also stimulated a desire for intellectual understanding of the human and natural world. New information, new plants, and new animals from the Americas, which were not mentioned in the Bible nor by Aristotle and other ancient Greek authorities, led many to challenge traditional Christian and classical ideas about the universe. Scientists replaced reliance on classical authorities with the methodologies of the Scientific Revolution: empiricism, scientific observation, mathematical proof, and experimental science. They created what is known today as the *scientific method*.

A number of significant inventions and instruments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the telescope, microscope, thermometer, and barometer—furthered scientific knowledge and understanding. There were significant scientific theories in astronomy and physics, including those associated with Nicolaus Copernicus, Johannes Kepler, Sir Isaac Newton, and Galileo Galilei (a physicist and astronomer who was charged with heresy by the Catholic Church for his public support of Copernicus’ theory that the earth revolved around the sun; he spent his final days under house arrest).

By the eighteenth century, scientific thinking and rational thought in Europe were reconciled with religious ideas and practice, as scientists justified their studies as identifying the patterns of the natural world to discover the plan of the divine. Many people accepted the concept that the universe operates according to natural laws, which human reason can discover and explain. The development of a culture of scientific inquiry in Europe was associated with its autonomous universities in some countries. In these institutions, scholars received some legal protection and were relatively free to study and argue what they pleased. Gradually, European scientific knowledge began to inform military, agricultural, and metallurgical technologies. By the early eighteenth century, this culture of scientific inquiry was diffused beyond Europe through the establishment of universities in Mexico, Peru, and North America.

The teacher sets up a gallery walk of major inventions and discoveries of the Scientific Revolution and gives students a source analysis chart that includes the following questions: **What were the effects of the Scientific Revolution? What modern ideas or technologies came from this invention or discovery?** When students have completed the gallery walk, the teacher leads a discussion of the effects of the Scientific Revolution and lists effects on the board as students identify them.

Newton's recognition that nature was understandable, predictable, and bound by natural laws proved an important inspiration to John Locke and other early thinkers associated with the Enlightenment, who argued that such laws and understandings were applicable to the human and moral world as well. The Enlightenment emerged from the Scientific Revolution and the political and social conditions of the eighteenth century.

Students focus on the question **Why were natural rights, the social contract, and other ideas of the Enlightenment revolutionary?** Beginning in the late seventeenth century, philosophers began to employ the use of reason and scientific methods to scrutinize previously accepted political and social doctrines. Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, and Thomas Jefferson proposed religious tolerance, equal rights of all before the law, and the *social contract*. The teacher focuses on the social contract, as it provides the necessary bridge to grade eight.

After explaining the three fundamental concepts, the teacher assigns a project: students may write a story, draw a visual, or act out the three ideas of the social contract. Students work alone on stories or visuals, but they form small groups for the acting option. The students may also engage in a service-learning project that emphasizes the importance of the responsibility of citizens in a democracy. If the people are the basis of the state, and the state has been upholding the rights of the people, then they must act to protect the state and other citizens, participate in state institutions, such as jury duty and voting, and help ensure rights for all.