

This is designed by:

Yasser BouBou, English teacher, Joul Jammal School.

E-mail: yasserboubou@yahoo.com, yanoh@scs-net.org

Phone: 00963 41 320497

Safaa Al-Jerdy, English teacher, Ein Al-Arous School.

E-mail: safaaaljerdi@yahoo.com

Phone: 00963 41 452509

First Secondary

English Language

Unit 6

Geography and Travel

Marco Polo

This lesson needs two classes to be completed:

The first class is for presentation

The second class is for follow up and evaluation

The Objectives:

- Scientific Objectives:

- The students should gather the full story of Marco Polo (Each group should get the allocated part of the story if possible).
- The students should tell the story to their friends in the classroom.
- The students should tell the reasons for this long trip.
- The students should know how to use the interactive maps on the internet.
- Get an idea about the geography of the places mentioned in the trip.
- Have confidence by making students play the role of the teacher in telling the story.
- Create a link with other activities in his book

2- Lingual skills:

- e students ask
questions and answer them.
- Enhance the perception of students of the new vocabulary and names of places presented or gathered.
- Enhance speaking, reading and writing skills.
- Encourage the student to share his ideas with others. this will develop conversation and communication.
- Encourage Students to start thinking in English language instead of translation.

3 - Technical:

- Enhance the ability of the students of using computer as hardware.
- Enhance the ability of the students of using software such as Microsoft word, power point,
- get the students think of different ways of getting the necessary information (key words, maps, books, etc.).
- get the students to start using the computer as a source of information, not for entertainment.

Warming Up: it will take up to 5 minutes

This includes greeting, preparation the computers, or the data show, ask some questions:

What is the date today?

Give the URL of the lesson, and ask students to wait.

Note: the following will be done as a substitute plan if there is no access to the internet in the school

Do please sit well and run the computers, the power point program, the lesson.

Give instructions about using the buttons of the keyboard (home, end, page up, page down, Esc).

Method of presentation: It will be:

- A direct method by making the students tell the story.
- Interactive by directing different questions to the different groups.

Presentation: it will take up to 40 minutes

The presentation will be as follows:

- show the title of the lesson only on the screen (write it on the black board)

MARCO POLO ADVENTURES

On the Road with Marco Polo: From Italy to China

- The text of the story is ready now.
- Put a map of the journey of Marco Polo on The screen (wall or computer), or just a hang print copy on the black board (substitute plan)
- Ask the students to start telling the story, they can use some notes or each member of the group can tell some part of the story and the others help him if he forgets something. They can refer to the map to tell the class where the events are. Each group must be given 5 minutes only to speak.
- between the pauses, the other students can ask some questions if they want

Students activity:

1- Ask the students to each create a picture postcard that a medieval traveler might have sent home from Persia. One side should contain a picture (downloaded or drawn freehand) of a geographical feature or a local product. The other side should contain a brief message describing some of the ideas of a journey from Acre to Hormuz.

2- Have each group select a desert the Taklimakan or the Gobi and then make a poster, referring to the websites visited in this lesson. The posters can be illustrated by images downloaded, by images cut from magazines, or by original drawings.

3- Have the students choose one of the five products described in this lesson (silk, porcelain, jade, lacquer ware, and tea) as the topic of a short report. Additional information can be found through EDSITEment-reviewed resource **Internet Public Library** (<http://www.ipl.org/>).

• Go to (<http://www.silk-road.com/toc/index.html>) **The Silk Road**. Scroll in the margin to *Maps*, then *Route Maps*, then (<http://www.silk-road.com/maps/images/polomap.jpg>)

Marco Polo to trace the Polos' route from Hormuz to the Black Sea. Once the Polos reached the Black Sea, they traveled westward along the southern coast until they arrived at the city of

Constantinople (modern Istanbul). In the 13th century Constantinople was a major trading port as well a center of art and architecture.

4- Have the students write a short essay about Constantinople. It can be illustrated with images downloaded from the websites visited in this lesson or by original drawings.

5- The students can locate Venice using the following links:

- Europe (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/europe_ref01.jpg) available through EDSITEment-reviewed resource **SARAI** (<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/cuvl/>). Find Italy, then find Venice.
- **Map of Italy** (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia02/italy_sm02.gif) Find Venice.
- **Map Machine** available through (<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine/>). Type *Venice*; then select *Venice, Italy* from the drop-down box and click on it.

Students should note that Venice is an archipelago (a group of islands) in a fairly shallow lagoon.

6-

Venice to China and back. The first leg of the journey ends at Hormuz. Have your students download and print (or hand out print copies of) a chart for taking notes, guiding questions as well as a map activity and a "postcard" template for the final assessment.

7- View images and descriptions of these five Chinese products by accessing the following resources available through **Asia Source** <http://www.asiasource.org/> :

- **Silkworm Raisers' Customs**
<http://chinaculture.esmartdesign.com/silkworm/silkworm.html> and Ancient Cloth
<http://www.ancientroute.com/resource/cloth/silk.htm>

8- Access **The Silk Road** <http://www.silk-road.com/toc/index.html> . Scroll in the margin to *Maps*, then *Route Maps*, then *Marco Polo*. Trace the Polo's route from China to Sumatra.

9- Go to **Marco Polo's Route**

<http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/maps/marcopolo.html> : and follow his route from Constantinople to Venice.

The evaluation will need another class

Evaluation and follow up: it will take 20 minutes

It will be based on questions only, you can use some of these question as you like:

- 1-What do you notice about the location of Venice that might make someone consider traveling to other places?
- 2- What information about Marco's family life suggests that he would want to travel?
- 3- Why did the Polos begin their journey to China by sea?
- 4-How would you describe the geography of the regions of Turkey and Armenia that the Polos traveled through?
- 5-What might have been their means of travel from Acre through Armenia?
- 6-What are the geographic features of modern Iran?
- 7-What factors determine the easiest route from Acre to Hormuz?
- 8-What is the terrain like in Afghanistan?
- 9-What difficulties might the Polos have met in traveling across the mountains of Afghanistan?
- 10-What might the living conditions in this region have been like?
- 11-What are some of the challenges in traveling across Afghanistan and into China?
- 12-Why was Kashgar an important stop along the Silk Road?

- 13-What sorts of products could be obtained there?
- 14-What are some of the products sold in Kashgar today?
- 15-What was (and is) the best way to travel from one end of the desert to the other?
- 16-Where is Dunhuang?
- 17-What type of art and architecture can be seen there?
- 18-What has long been the major means of transporting goods (and people) across the Taklimakan?
- 19-What physical characteristics enable the camel to withstand the harsh environment of the desert?
- 20-What is the purpose of the bells used by the camel drivers?
- 21-How would you describe the personality of a camel?
- 22-How does the Gobi compare to the Taklimakan?
- 23-What were some of the psychological challenges posed to travelers by the natural environment of the Gobi?
- 24-What were the major products of 13th century China?
- 25-Where does silk come from, and how is silk cloth produced?
- 26-What are the origins of Chinese pottery and porcelain?
- 27-How is tea produced, and why did drinking tea become such a popular pastime?
- 28-What route did the Polos follow from China to Indonesia?
- 29-What are the geography and climate of Sumatra?
- 30-What are some of the important products of Indonesia?
- 31-What are some of the products of modern Sri Lanka? Which might have been important products in the days of Marco Polo?
- 32-What are the geography and climate of southern India?
- 33-What are some of the main products of southern India?
- 34-What route did the Polos take from Hormuz to Constantinople?
- 35-What seas (small sections of the Mediterranean) did he sail through?
- 36-Who were the Mongols?
- 37-What was the Mongol Empire?
- 38-Who was Kublai Khan, and what region did he rule?
- 39-What does China look like on a map?
- 40-What are China's major rivers?
- 41-Where do most of the Chinese live and why do they live there?
- 42-What was life like in 13th century Hangzhou?

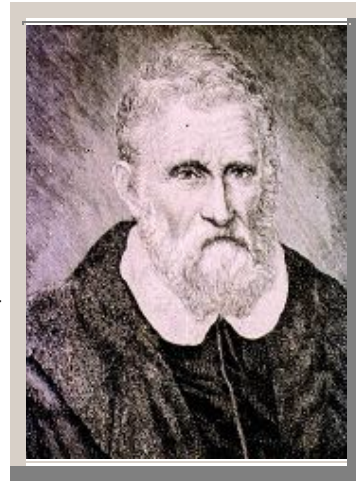
The whole text of the story of Marco Polo

MARCO POLO ADVENTURES

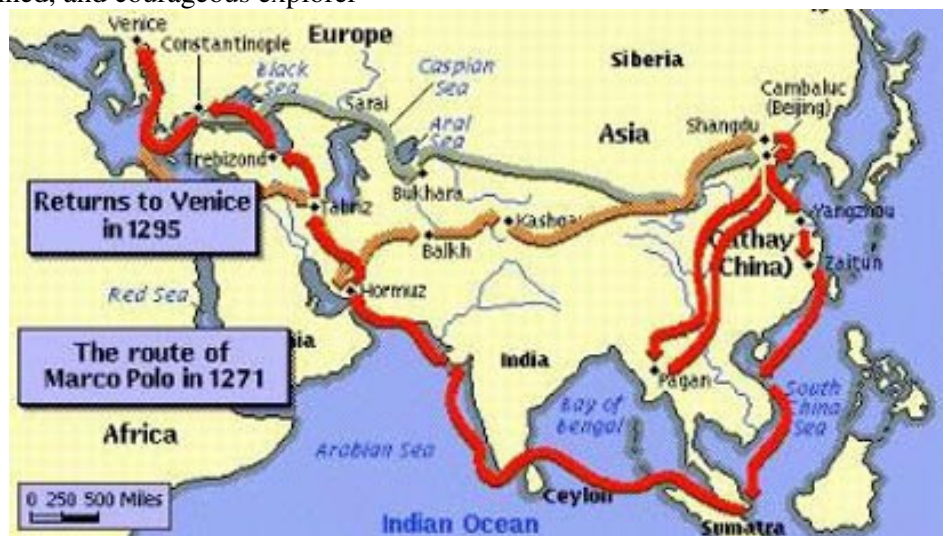
On the Road with Marco Polo: From Italy to China

"I did not tell half of what I saw"

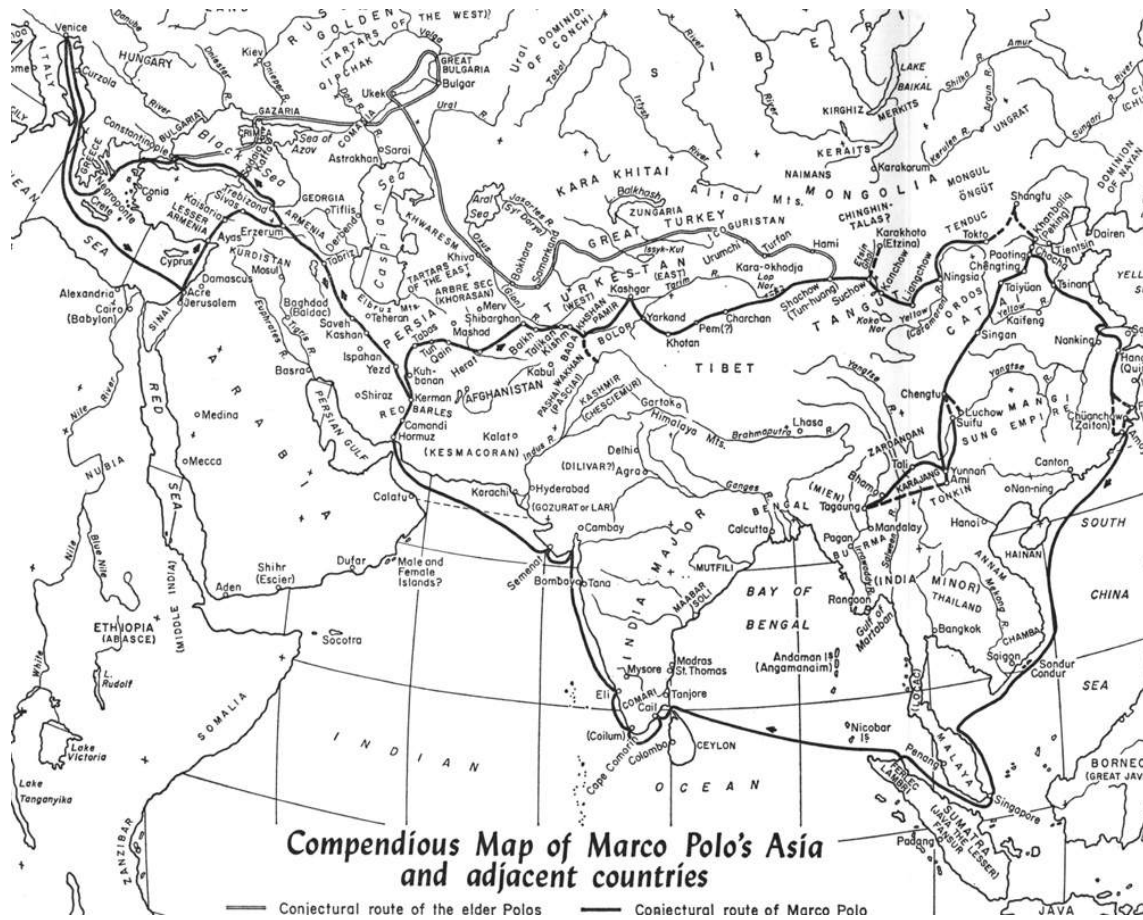
Marco Polo was the most important traveler of his time. He came into the world in 1254. Marco lived in a city called Venice. It wasn't the best place for growing up. By the time, the explorer Nicolo Polo, Marco's father returned, Marco was 14 years old! When his father decided to go on another exploration, he agreed to take Marco with him. A few years later, Marco Polo, his father, and his father's friend left on a long trip. On their trip they visited many places. On this trip, Marco Polo discovered eye glasses, ice-cream, spaghetti, and the riches of Asia! When he returned, no one believed his stories of the riches he found in Asia. Marco Polo showed them some of the riches he had brought home. That made Marco Polo famous. When Marco was near death, a priest came in his room to ask him if he'd like to admit that his stories were false. Instead, Marco said, "I did not tell half of what I saw". Those were his last words.



Marco Polo was a great explorer. He was very brave. Marco was not scared at all when they left to go on the trip. When people would not believe his stories of his discoveries, he was determined to make them believe him. Marco Polo was very courageous too. He wasn't scared of the people in the different countries he visited. Marco Polo was a very brave, determined, and courageous explorer



Colored Map



On the Road with Marco Polo: A Boy in 13th Century Venice

We will begin this activity by telling the students that they will be learning about a young man, Marco Polo, who was one of the first Europeans to travel to China. Marco grew up in the 13th century in Venice, an important trading city in Italy.

Marco Polo's father and uncle returned to Venice when he was 15 years old. Two years later, when they set off again for China, they decided to take Marco with them. The Polos began their long journey by sailing across the Mediterranean to Acre (in modern Israel). From Acre, they sailed up the Mediterranean coast to modern Turkey. They then followed a trade route across Turkey and Armenia.

From Armenia the Polos turned south and proceeded through Persia (modern Iran) to the port of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Iran is an elevated plateau with an average height of over 3000 feet above sea level. The Zagros Mountains cover much of the western half of the country. The only fertile area is in the north, along the coast of the Caspian Sea. The flatter regions in the center of the region are arid deserts.

Marco Polo and his father and uncle had traveled all the way from Venice to Hormuz, a port on the Persian Gulf. From here they had hoped to travel by ship to China. But they were so concerned about the seaworthiness of the ships they found there that they changed their plans and decided instead to follow a series of trade routes across Asia to China. They set out, traveling northeast through Persia until they entered Afghanistan.

After resting up and replenishing their supplies in the trading city of Kashgar, Marco Polo and his father and uncle continued eastward on their journey from Venice to China. They had some difficult times ahead

The Taklimakan is Asia's driest desert, a vast expanse of pebbles and sifting sands nestled between two mountain ranges. The Polos chose a route that skirted the southern edge of the desert, trudging through the arid landscape from one oasis to the next. Each oasis was a welcome haven, offering fresh water, food supplies, and pack animals. Some of these stopping places were famous for fresh fruits, such as melons and grapes – a great treat for the weary travelers whose diets consisted mostly of hard bread, cheese, salted meat, and water. Today, a few of the ancient oases offer welcome relief to hot and thirsty tourists.

At the eastern edge of the Taklimakan lay the city of Dunhuang, long famous for its Buddhist temples, statues, and paintings

Most people associate desert crossings with camels, and rightly so. The merchants who transported goods across the Taklimakan and the Gobi would have been in a bad way without their sturdy, resilient camels

From Dunhuang, the Polos set out across the Gobi, Asia's largest desert. For over a month they trekked through this harsh wasteland. Marco described how travelers in the Gobi were often plagued by strange mirages (phantom figures of friends in the distance) or frightening sounds (weird murmuring or repetitive drumbeats). Such illusions were caused by the intensity of the sun, the lack of water, and the seemingly endless stretches of the "unfriendly" landscapes.

After a long trek across the Gobi Desert, Marco Polo, his father, and his uncle finally arrived at the Shangdu, the summer palace of Kublai Khan. At last they stood face to face with the (<http://www.chinapage.com/painting/kublai.html>) **Emperor of China** (painting available through Asia Source)

At this time, most of Asia was under control of the Mongols, a nomadic people whose homeland was in the Gobi. In the 12th century, Mongol leader Genghis Khan had unified the many tribes of the Mongols and then led armies across Asia.

Kublai Khan was very impressed with Marco's powers of observation and his skill with language (he had picked up several local languages as he traveled through Central Asia). So he appointed him to his court. For the next 17 years, Marco was sent on many missions throughout the khan's realm.

Kublai's capital was built on the site of modern Beijing. It was known as *Khanbalik* (a Mongol term)

located about 160 miles south of Shangdu. Kublai's vast empire was made up of mountains, deserts, high plains, rivers, and fertile valleys.

After spending 17 years in China, Marco Polo and his father and uncle finally had an opportunity to return home. Kublai Khan asked them to lead an expedition to deliver a Mongol princess to Persia, where she was to be married. From Persia they would continue on to Venice.

Finally, the weather improved and the Polo expedition set sail again. They crossed the Indian Ocean and stopped at the island of Sri Lanka (formerly known as Ceylon), just off the southeastern tip of India.

From Sri Lanka, the Polos sailed along the southern and western coast of India, stopping in several places.

Marco Polo was on the last leg of his journey home from China to Venice. After visiting several seaports in India, he and his party sailed across the Arabian Sea and to the mouth of the Persian Gulf, landing at the port city of Hormuz. Marco had visited Hormuz with his father and uncle many years before when they were on their way to China. At that time, they had considered a sea route too dangerous and decided instead to travel eastward across Asia following a land route. Perhaps they were right – by the time they arrived in Hormuz on their journey home, nearly all of the 600 people who had set out with them from China had

perished! Historians attribute this to a combination of storms, disease, and combat with hostile natives encountered along the way.

Marco and his father and uncle boarded a trading ship in Constantinople and sailed home to Venice. This final lap of their long journey from China was an easy voyage on the Mediterranean Sea.

Resources:

Internet Public Library (<http://www.ipl.org/>).

The Silk Road (<http://www.silk-road.com/toc/index.html>

Marco Polo (<http://www.silk-road.com/maps/images/polomap.jpg>)

Europe (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/europe_ref01.jpg)

EDSITEment-reviewed resource **SARAI**

(<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/indiv/southasia/cuvl/>)..

Map of Italy (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia02/italy_sm02.gif).

Map Machine (<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine/>).

Asia Source <http://www.asiasource.org/> :

Silkworm Raisers' Customs <http://chinaculture.esmartdesign.com/silkworm/silkworm.html>

Ancient Cloth <http://www.ancientroute.com/resource/cloth/silk.htm>

The Silk Road <http://www.silk-road.com/toc/index.html> .

Marco Polo's Route <http://depts.washington.edu/uwch/silkroad/maps/marcopolo.html>

Emperor of China <http://www.chinapage.com/painting/kublai.html>)