

History of Ancient China

Section 2



MAIN IDEAS

1. Han dynasty government was largely based on the ideas of Confucius.
2. Han China supported and strengthened family life.
3. The Han made many achievements in art, literature, and learning.

Key Terms

sundial a device that uses the position of shadows cast by the sun to tell the time of day

seismograph a device that measures the strength of earthquakes

acupuncture the practice of inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points to cure disease or relieve pain

Copy 2 times each on back page

Section Summary

HAN DYNASTY GOVERNMENT

Liu Bang (lee-oo bang), a peasant, won control of China and became the first emperor of the Han dynasty. He earned the people's loyalty and trust. He lowered taxes for farmers and made punishments less severe. He set up a government that built on the foundation begun by the Qin. Liu Bang's successor, Wudi (woo-dee), made Confucianism the official government philosophy of China. To get a government job, a person had to pass a test based on Confucian teachings. However, wealthy and influential families still controlled the government.

What did Liu Bang do to win the people's loyalty and trust?

FAMILY LIFE

A firm social order took hold during Han rule. In the Confucian view, peasants made up the second-highest class. Merchants occupied the lowest class because they merely bought and sold what others had made. However, this social division did not indicate wealth or power. Peasants were still poor and merchants were still rich.

Why did Confucian thinking devalue merchants?

Section 2, *continued*

During Wudi's reign, Confucian teachings about the family were also honored. Children were taught from birth to respect their elders. Within the family, the father had absolute power. Han officials believed that if the family was strong and people obeyed the father, then people would obey the emperor, too. Chinese parents valued boys more highly than girls. Some women, however, still gained power. They could influence their sons' families. An older widow could even become the head of the family.

Who had absolute power in the family under the Han?

Circle the sentence that explains which women could become heads of families.

HAN ACHIEVEMENTS

The Han dynasty was a time of great accomplishments. Art and literature thrived, and inventors developed many useful devices. Han artists painted portraits and realistic scenes that showed everyday life. Poets developed new styles of verse. Historian Sima Qian wrote a complete history of China until the Han dynasty.

The Han Chinese invented paper. They made it by grinding plant fibers into a paste and then letting it dry in sheets. They made "books" by pasting sheets together into a long sheet that was rolled into a scroll.

Other Han innovations included the **sundial** and the **seismograph**. They developed the distinctive Chinese medical practice of **acupuncture** (AK-yoo-punk-cher). These and other Han inventions and advances are still used today.

Explain how the Han Chinese made "books."

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY ← *Complete this!*

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Which invention of the Han Chinese has the greatest impact on your daily life? Explain your answer.

Section 2, *continued*

DIRECTIONS Write a word or phrase that has the same meaning as the term given.

1. acupuncture _____
2. seismograph _____
3. sundial _____

DIRECTIONS Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the word in the word pair that best completes the sentence.

4. Under Emperor _____, Confucianism became China's official government policy. (Wudi/Liu Bang)
5. _____ was born a peasant, but he became emperor after his army won control of China after the fall of the Qin dynasty. (Wudi/Liu Bang)
6. Under the _____ dynasty, the Chinese made several advances in art, literature, medicine, and science. (Qin/Han)
7. A _____ is a device that measures the strength of an earthquake. (seismograph/sundial)
8. The practice of inserting fine needles through the skin at specific points to cure disease or relieve pain is called _____.
(seismograph/acupuncture)
9. A _____ is an early type of clock. (seismograph/sundial)
10. The _____ dynasty rose after the collapse of the _____ dynasty. (Qin/Han); (Qin/Han)

DIRECTIONS Look at each set of three terms. On the line provided, write the letter of the term that does not relate to the others.

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|-----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| _____ 11. | a. acupuncture | b. paper | c. Great Wall |
| _____ 12. | a. Shi Huangdi | b. Han dynasty | c. Wudi |
| _____ 13. | a. peasants | b. military | c. artisans |