

THE MONGOLS

Name: _____ Name: _____

Directions: with a partner, use the words in the first box to make a question in the second box. Read the passage below and use the information to answer your question in the third box.

Words for question 1	Empire, Brutality, Military
Questions 1	_____ _____ _____
Answer to question 1	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Introduction to the Mongols

The Mongolian pastoral nomads relied on their animals for survival and moved their habitat several times a year in search of water and grass for their herds. Most Westerners accept the stereotype of the 13th-century Mongols as barbaric plunderers intent merely to maim, slaughter, and destroy. This perception, based on Persian, Chinese, Russian, and other accounts of the speed and ruthlessness with which the Mongols carved out the largest contiguous land empire in world history, has shaped both Asian and Western images of the Mongols and of their earliest leader, Chinggis Khan (Genghis Khan). Such a view has diverted attention from the considerable contributions the Mongols made to 13th- and 14th-century civilization. Though the brutality of the Mongols' military campaigns ought not to be downplayed or ignored, neither should their influence on Eurasian culture be overlooked.

Words for question 2	Horses, tactics, victory
Questions 2	_____ _____ _____
Answer to question 2	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Mongol Military Success

One of the Mongol's biggest advantages over other nations was their use of the horse, both in battle and as transportation. In battle, Mongol cavalymen, equipped with a unique Mongolian bow, could outmaneuver, and thus outfight, the common foot soldiers that most nations employed. Heavily armored soldiers were often employed by Europeans and thus, Mongol warriors could easily outpace them and thus utterly destroy larger European forces. Due to the fact they often lacked superiority in numbers, the Mongols, instead of making costly charges directly at the enemy, sought to make ambushes, fake retreats, and to surround the enemy. The Mongols often faced off against much larger European and Middle Eastern foes. Unlike the Mongols, these forces often fought by sending soldiers into reckless

charges straight at the enemy. The Mongols were able to take advantage of these charges by using the before mentioned tactics. Tactics like these required the Mongols to be extremely mobile, which was made possible by horses.

Words for question 3	Marco Polo, exchange, China
Questions 3	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 3	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Support for Foreign Contact and Exchange

The Mongols’ receptiveness to foreigners was a critical factor in promoting cultural exchange and a truly “global” history. Their attitude of relative openness toward foreigners and foreign influence led to an extraordinary interchange of products, peoples, technology, and science throughout the Mongol domains.

So it is no accident that Marco Polo reached China during this era. And also no accident that **Ibn Battuta**, the great Islamic traveler from Morocco, also reached China during this time, and that **Rabban Sauma**, a Nestorian Christian from the area around Beijing, reached Europe and had audiences with the kings of England and France and the Pope.

Words for question 4	Silk Road, Pepper, Trade
Questions 4	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 4	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Words for question 5	Pax Mongolica, safety, travel
Questions 5	<hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Mongols Support Trade, Facilitating East-West Contacts

The Mongols were quite receptive to commerce. This attitude, which facilitated contacts with West Asia and Europe, contributed to the rebirth of the Silk Road in this period. Trade in the Mongol Era inextricably linked Europe and Asia and ushered in an era of frequent and extended contacts between East and West. Once the Mongols had achieved relative stability and order in their newly acquired domains, they promoted inter-state relations through the so-called “Pax Mongolica” – the Mongolian Peace. As the overlords of an enormous territory in Asia, the Mongols were able to guarantee the security and safety of travelers and traders in their empire.

Through this the Mongols expedited and encouraged travel in the sizable section of Asia that was under their rule, permitting European merchants, craftsmen, and envoys to journey as far as China for the first time. Asian goods like pepper, silk, cinnamon, and nutmeg reached Europe along the Silk Road and the ensuing European demand for these products eventually inspired the search for a sea route to Asia. Thus, it could be said that the Mongol invasions indirectly led to Europe’s “Age of Exploration” in the 15th century.

Words for question 6	Caliph, executed, unity
Questions 6	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 6	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Words for question 7	Scholars, Baghdad, advances
Questions 7	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 7	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

The Mongols and Islam

The Mongol dynasty’s relation to Islam, in particular, had tremendous impact on history.

The Mongols often massacred the local leadership when they conquered a region. The Middle East was no exception. When the Mongols arrived in the Middle East, the political center of the Muslim world was Baghdad. This was the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate and the home of the leader of the Muslim world, the Caliph (much of the Caliph’s power was symbolic by this point). To ensure the submission of the Muslims, Mongol leaders ordered the execution of the Caliph. With this act, the position of Caliph was lost and Muslim unity weakened beyond repair. After decline of the Mongol Empire, the Muslim world broke up into several independent states.

However, the Mongols had a great respect for Muslim Scholars. They recruited a number of Muslims to help in the rule of China, especially in the field of financial administration – Muslims often served as tax collectors and administrators. They were accorded extraordinary opportunities during the Mongol period because Khubilai Khan and the other Mongol rulers of China could not rely exclusively upon the subjugated Chinese to help in ruling China. They needed outsiders, and the Muslims were among those who assisted Khubilai.

The Mongol rulers of the Middle East recognized that Islamic scholars had made great leaps in the studies of astronomy and medicine, and they invited many specialists in those fields to come to Bagdad. Among those to make the trip was the Persian astronomer Jamal Al-din, set up an observatory. Bringing with him many diagrams and advanced astronomical instruments from Persia, Jamal Al-din assisted in developing a new, more accurate calendar. The Mongols were also impressed by the Persians’ advances in medicine. They recruited a number of Persian doctors to study in Bagdad which became an important center of learning in the world.

Words for question 8	China, promote, developments
Questions 8	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 8	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

The Mongols of China

The Mongol era in China is remembered chiefly for the rule of Khubilai Khan, grandson of Chinggis Khan. Khubilai patronized painting and the theater, which experienced a golden age during the Yuan dynasty, over which the Mongols ruled. Khubilai and his successors also recruited and employed Confucian scholars and Tibetan Buddhist monks as advisers, a policy that led to many innovative ideas and the construction of new temples and monasteries.

The Mongol Khans also funded advances in medicine and astronomy throughout their domains. And their construction projects – extension of the Grand Canal in the direction of Beijing, the building of a capital city in Daidu (present-day Beijing) and of summer palaces in Shangdu (“Xanadu”) and Takht-i-Sulaiman, and the construction of a sizable network of roads and postal stations throughout their lands – promoted developments in science and engineering.

Words for question 9	Russia, taxes, impact
Questions 9	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 9	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Words for question 10	Moscow, Migration, Northern
Questions 10	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Answer to question 10	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

The Mongols of Russia

The crushing victories of Mongol armies initiated nearly two and one-half centuries of Mongol dominance in Russia. Russian princes were forced to pay tribute. Mongol taxes fell particularly heavily on the Russian peasantry, who had to give up their crops and labor to both their own princes and the Mongol overlords. Impoverished and ever fearful of the lightning raids of Mongol marauders, the peasants fled to remote areas or became, in effect, the serfs (like slaves) of the Russian ruling class in return for protection. The decision on the part of many peasants to become serfs (lifetime laborers) of the nobility resulted in a major change in the rural social structure of Russia. Until the mid-19th century, the great majority of the population of Russia were serfs bound to the tiny minority of nobles who owned great estates.

Some Russian towns made profits on the increased trade Mongol links made possible, and sometimes the gains exceeded the tribute they paid to the Golden Horde. No town benefited from the Mongol presence more than Moscow. Badly plundered and partially burned in the early Mongol assaults, the city was gradually rebuilt and its ruling princes steadily swallowed up nearby towns and surrounding villages. After 1328, Moscow also profited from its status as the tribute collector for the Mongol khans. With this new status, Moscow soon became the most important city of Russia which caused a northern migration of Russians and Moscow replacing Kiev as the capital of Russia.