

SECTION  
**3**

# Reading for Understanding

## ▶ Key Ideas

### BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

China has a very long history. The people lived a traditional life during much of that history—until the Communist Revolution.

### NOW YOU WILL LEARN

Some aspects of traditional life survive in China, while new ways of life have been developed.

## ▶ Vocabulary

### TERMS & NAMES

**Daoism** (DOW•IHZ•uhm) a Chinese belief system based on the idea of natural order in the world

**Dao** (DOW) according to the belief system of Daoism, a force that guides the whole universe

**Silk Roads** trade routes used between China and Southwest Asia

**Buddhism** a religion that is based on the teaching of Siddhartha Gautama

**Siddhartha Gautama** (sihd•DAHR•tuh GAW•tuh•muh) the founder of Buddhism also known as the Buddha, or “enlightened one”

**Buddha** the founder of Buddhism who taught that people could end their suffering by stopping their desire for worldly goods

### BACKGROUND VOCABULARY

**ritual** a set of regularly followed ceremonies

**communal** shared ownership of property

### REVIEW

**Confucianism** a Chinese belief system based on the teachings of Confucius

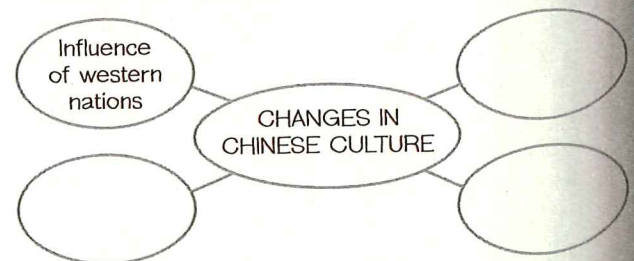
## ▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the web diagram shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the outer ovals to record main ideas about changes in Chinese culture. Add ovals as needed.



See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R4

### FIND MAIN IDEAS



**GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS**

Go to Interactive Review @ [ClassZone.com](http://ClassZone.com)

# Changing Chinese Culture

## Connecting to Your World

Have you ever asked your grandparents what life was like when they were your age? Cultural change can happen at any place and time. For example, Mei (may) Ling's grandmother, who lives in the country, talks of the village school she attended. Mei Ling's parents moved to Shanghai in search of better jobs. As a result, Mei Ling attends a big urban school instead of a village school. The move from the farm to the city is just one type of change in China. In this section, you'll learn how traditional Chinese culture is affected by these changes.

## Traditional Chinese Culture

**KEY QUESTION** What are some aspects of traditional Chinese culture?

Chinese culture is thousands of years old. Though life has changed in modern China, traditional values—such as close family ties and respect for one's parents and ancestors—remain strong.



**Chinese Family** Like Mei Ling, this Chinese girl has a strong relationship with her grandmother.

**Martial Arts** Chinese students practice traditional martial arts.



**Family and Village Life** In traditional Chinese culture, family was very important. Older men made all the major decisions for the family. Men were taught to perform **rituals** honoring their ancestors. Women were taught that it was their duty to marry, have children, and care for their husbands' parents. Children were expected to respect their parents and care for them in old age.

For thousands of years, most Chinese people were farmers. Each day the villagers would go out to the fields to work. Nearly all Chinese lived in small rural villages of about 200 people. Houses in the village were crowded closely together. Most had a courtyard where chickens and pigs wandered in search of food. Small vegetable gardens provided food for the family meals. The villagers shared a well and bought some goods at local markets.

**Beliefs** Three different belief systems—Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism—have influenced Chinese life. **Confucianism** is the belief system based on the teachings of Confucius, whom you learned about in Section 2. In Confucianism, the person who is older or has more power has a responsibility to be kind to others. The younger or less powerful person is expected to be respectful and obedient. Confucianism also teaches that people can help to better themselves through education.

The second Chinese belief system, **Daoism** (DOW•IHZ•uhm), is based on the ideas of a teacher named Laozi. He taught that the world has a natural order and that a force called the **Dao** (DOW), meaning “the Way,” guides all things. Laozi taught that people should observe nature and use those observations to find a way to peace and harmony.

**Confucius' Birthday Celebration** Dancers in traditional costumes celebrate the birth of Confucius in 551 B.C. Why do the Chinese still honor Confucius?



## COMPARING Belief Systems



### CONFUCIANISM

- Social order and good government should be based on strong family relationships.
- Respect for parents and elders helps to create order in society.
- Education helps to improve both individuals and society.



### DAOISM

- The natural order—or the relationship among all living things in the universe—matters more than the social order.
- A universal force called the Dao (meaning “the Way”) guides all things.
- Humans should learn to live simply and in harmony with nature.



### BUDDHISM

- People suffer because of emotional attachments and their desire for worldly goods.
- People can stop suffering and achieve peace (or nirvana) by not wanting.
- To achieve nirvana, people should follow the Eightfold Path: right views, goals, speech, actions, job, effort, concentration, and meditation.

### CRITICAL THINKING

**Compare and Contrast** How are the three belief systems similar? How are they different?

Missionaries who traveled the **Silk Roads**, the trade routes used between China and Southwest Asia, brought **Buddhism** to China. Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of **Siddhartha Gautama** (sihd•DAHR•tuh GAW•tuh•muh), also known as the **Buddha**, or “enlightened one.” Buddha taught that people suffer because their minds are not at ease. This suffering comes from wanting life to be different. The Buddha said people could stop the suffering by accepting life as it is and following the Eightfold Path, detailed above.

**Written Language** The development of a written Chinese language allowed the government to communicate with people in all parts of the empire, no matter what language they spoke. Chinese characters do not represent sounds, as Western letters do. They represent ideas or words. People who spoke differently could still read each other’s letters because they used the same characters to write.

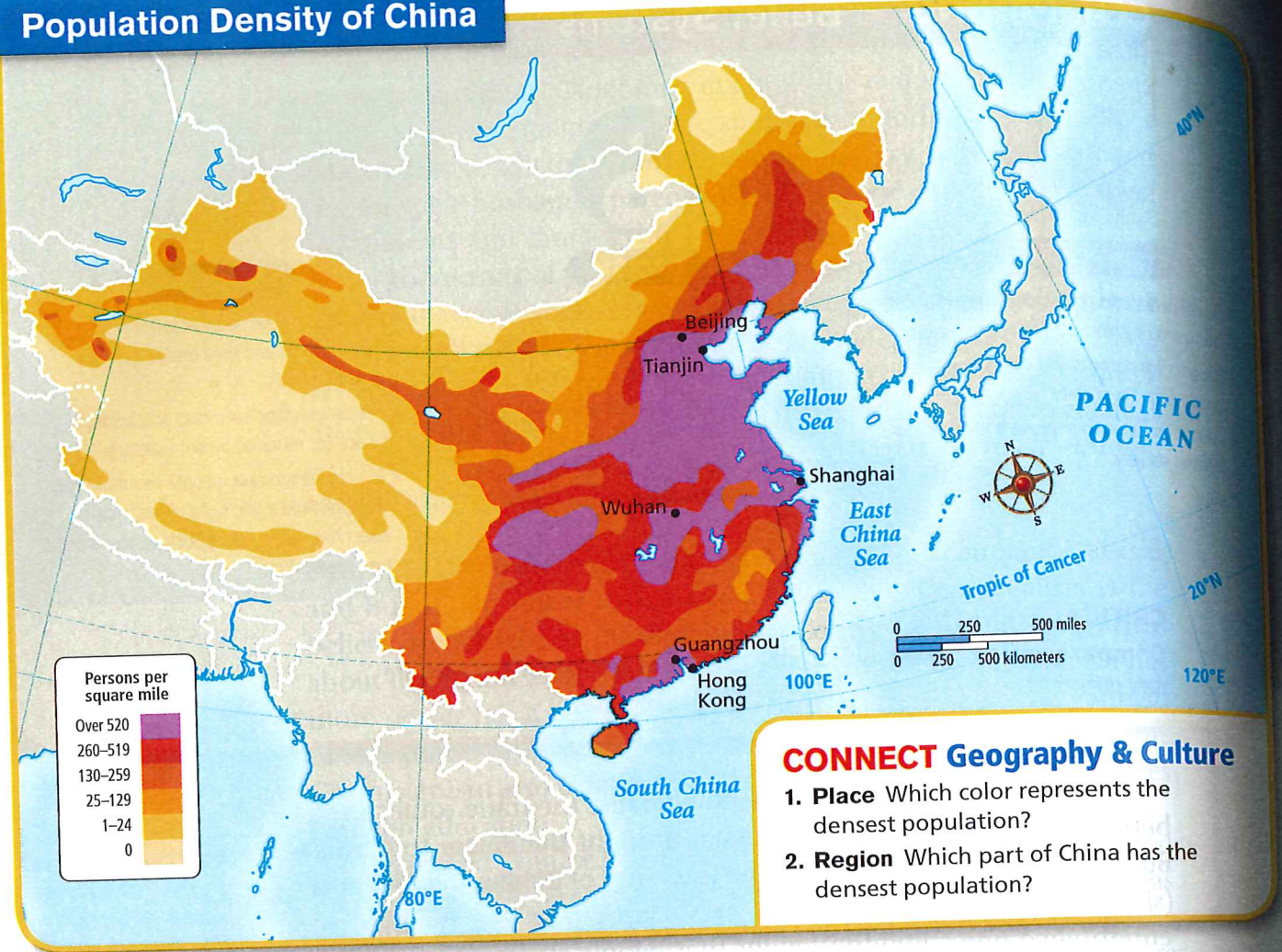
**The Arts** Some of traditional China’s greatest achievements in the arts were in bronze casting, jade carving, and dance. Bronze objects such as bells and containers featured geometric designs and were decorated with tigers, snakes, birds, and oxen. Jade was used to make jewelry, containers, and statues. There were two kinds of traditional Chinese dance: one based on proper behavior as taught by Confucius, and one based on Chinese warrior exercises, which we call martial arts.

**SUMMARIZE** Discuss some of the aspects of traditional Chinese culture.



**Chinese Character** This character stands for the Dao, which means “the way.”

## Population Density of China



## Changes in Chinese Life

**KEY QUESTION** How did life change in China after the Communists took over?

The traditional Chinese way of life changed dramatically with the rise of communism. Family farms ceased to exist, and farms were reorganized into **communal** farms where ownership was shared. The farms were strictly controlled by the government. Every family had a registration booklet listing its members. Families needed the booklet to get food, medical services, housing, schooling, and jobs.

**Moving to Cities** As a part of the new way of life under the Communists, people had to get government permission to move. But little movement was allowed until after 1978, when economic reforms were made. These reforms brought new industry to the cities. As a result, workers were allowed to move from farms into towns or cities to fill jobs there. Workers also moved into cities on the east coast where the booming economy required many construction workers. Industry even began to emerge in rural areas.




**Beijing** China's capital is a crowded, rapidly modernizing city. Today, China has about 1.3 billion people, compared with about 298 million in the United States.

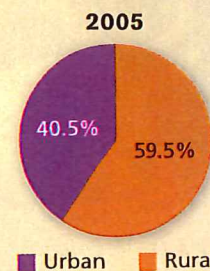
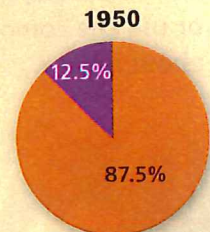
The shift in population to the cities was a major change in Chinese society. Today, about 60 percent of Chinese people live in rural areas, compared to almost 88 percent in 1950. Part of the reason for this spectacular urban growth is due to the expanded industrial sites in smaller towns, especially in eastern China. China has 34 cities with over a million people. In comparison, the United States has 9 cities of that size. China's two largest cities, Beijing and Shanghai, are huge. At the end of 2004, Beijing had 14.9 million residents and Shanghai, China's largest city, had 17.4 million. The population of these two cities is about equal to that of the state of California.

**Jobs and Education** After the economic reforms of 1978, China's new leaders set very high standards for education. Today, students are expected to study many hours; they have little time for extracurricular activities. The law calls for school attendance through ninth grade. More rural children now complete nine years of schooling. Students must then do well on national exams to be able to go on to trade school, high school, or college. However, education is not free. Parents must pay fees and buy textbooks.

Cities have more educational opportunities than rural areas. Many city teenagers go on to high school. However, in the past, only a very small percentage of students went to college. Today, China's goal is to have 20 percent of its students in college by 2010.

 **EVALUATE** Explain how life changed in China after the Communists took over.

### Population in China




Source: *China Statistical Yearbook 2004* and *Globalis*

### CRITICAL THINKING

#### Compare and Contrast

By how much did the urban population increase between 1950 and 2005?

## A Day in Cheng's Life

 To learn more about Cheng and his world, go to the Activity Center @ [ClassZone.com](http://ClassZone.com)

In Chinese, Cheng's name looks like this:

成

**Hi! My name is Cheng.** I am 14 years old and live in Yihuang, a rural town of about 20,000 in eastern China. Studying is very important to me. But I don't study all the time! On weekends, my friends and I play table tennis, basketball, or use the computers at the community center. Let me tell you about my day.



**7 A.M.** I have breakfast with my parents before they go to work and I leave for school. Today we're having eggs, peanuts, and steamed buns for breakfast.



**8 A.M.-5:30 P.M.** I have a long school day. We begin by saluting the flag and exercising. During the day, I have classes in Chinese, math, science, and history.



**6 P.M.** I'm meeting my parents and other family members at my grandparents' house for dinner. Tonight we're having one of my favorites, Four Happiness Pork along with rice and vegetables.



**7 P.M.** I have a basketball game tonight. I play on my school team. We're pretty good! After-school activities for other kids in my class are sports like gymnastics or music lessons. When I get home, I'll have homework to do.

### CONNECT to Your Life

**Journal Entry** Think about your own daily schedule. What do you spend most of your day doing? How is your life different from Cheng's life? Record your ideas in your journal.

## Clashes Over Popular Culture

**KEY QUESTION** How has the government tried to control popular culture?

Life in modern China is a blend of old and new ways. Many people still live in rural areas and lead a more traditional life. But even that way of life is changing now that they have more access to television, computers, and cell phones. The Chinese government attempts to control the content available to people through technology.

Recently, the Communists began tighter control of foreign television programs. The government is taking this action because it is worried about the spread of democratic ideas. Television programs are forbidden to use the English language or show violence.

People in cities and even in many small towns have access to e-mail and the Internet. However, they cannot visit Web sites the government does not approve of or send messages that criticize their leaders.

In the past, the government demanded that art spread Communist ideas. Now theaters and art galleries show plays and works about a variety of subjects in the artists' own styles. Writers are beginning to discuss social issues but are not allowed to criticize the government.

**DRAW CONCLUSIONS** Draw conclusions about how the Chinese government controls popular culture.

### Section 3 Assessment



#### ONLINE QUIZ

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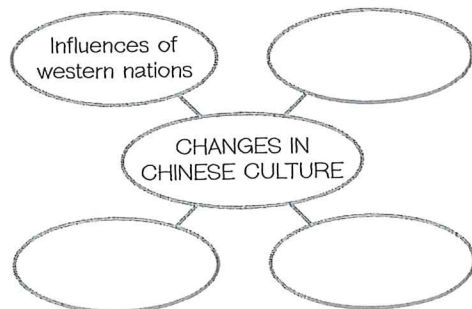
#### TERMS & NAMES

##### 1. Explain the importance of

- Daoism
- Silk Roads
- Buddhism

#### USE YOUR READING NOTES

- ##### 2. Find Main Ideas
- Use your completed web to answer the following question:  
How have Chinese society and culture changed since dynastic times?



#### KEY IDEAS

3. What are the most important traditional Chinese values?
4. Which three belief systems influenced Chinese society?
5. How has the distribution of population in China changed since the 1950s?

#### CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Draw Conclusions** Why do you think the Chinese government is encouraging more students to go to college?
7. **Summarize** In what ways has life in China changed since the new leadership took over after 1978?
8. **CONNECT to Today** Which Confucian idea continues to influence Chinese society?
9. **ART Sketch a Design** Use the Internet or art books to find examples of Chinese bronze vessels. Create and sketch a design that could be used to create a bronze vessel.



# COMPARING Rural and Urban China

Until the 1970s, many more Chinese lived in the countryside than in cities. Then people began moving into the cities in record numbers. Today more than 40 percent of all Chinese live in the cities.

## Traditional Countryside

Market day in small towns and villages is an important day for rural Chinese to do their shopping or to sell goods. Most of the goods are produced in the area near the marketplace. Market day is also a time to see friends and relatives who live in the area.



### Jobs

A young boy feeds his water buffalo. Water buffalo still provide power for farm work.



### Production

Peasants gather tomatoes for sale at the local market.

Outdoor vegetable market in eastern China ▼



### Transportation

A farmer transports geese and chickens to market.





**Jobs**

China's economic boom has triggered many construction projects, especially in cities.

## Booming Cities

Life in bustling, noisy cities like Shanghai and Beijing is very different from the less hectic life of the rural areas. Many people work in factories, as street vendors, at office jobs, or at their own businesses. Shopping takes place in Western-style malls or in stores in city neighborhoods.



**Production**

High-tech assembly plants like this digital camera plant have popped up in many Chinese cities.



**Transportation**

With a top speed of 267 miles per hour, Shanghai's maglev (magnetic levitation) train is the fastest in the world.



▲ Crowded, busy street in Shanghai

### CRITICAL THINKING

**1. Compare and Contrast**

What differences can be seen in the way goods are sold in the city and in the country?

**2. Make Inferences**

In what ways would a person's life change if he or she moved from the country to the city?