

**Module: Southeast and East Asia**  
**Topic Content: Cultural Influences of East Asia**

**Cultural Influences of East Asia**



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**Menu**



**Photos**



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**The Great Wall of China**



The Great Wall of China is located near China's northern border. This structure extends over 13,000 miles and was used as a defensive barrier for thousands of years. It consists of multiple walls with interspersed guard towers. The Great Wall of China reflects Chinese strength, as well as the country's desire to keep out foreign influences.

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**The Forbidden City**



**Photos**



The Forbidden City is a palace complex located in Beijing, the capital of China. It was originally constructed during the fifteenth century and contains 980 buildings. For hundreds of years, the Forbidden City was the home of Chinese emperors, and the center of Chinese government. Today, the complex serves as a museum.

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**Terracotta Army**



**Photos**



The Terracotta Army is a collection of more than 8,000 life-sized sculptures. Terracotta is a type of baked clay. This clay was used to create an army of soldiers, horses, and chariots for the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, the first Chinese Emperor. The Terracotta Army was discovered in 1974, after being buried for more than 2,000 years.

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**Beopjusa**



**Photos**



Beopjusa is a Buddhist temple complex in South Korea. It has been active for more than 1,400 years, and at one point, was home to more than 3,000 monks. The complex contains the oldest and tallest wooden pagoda in South Korea.

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**Nestorian Stele**



The Nestorian Stele is a limestone block that was inscribed in 781 A.D. (C.E.). The inscriptions discuss Christian missionaries and communities in China. It provides evidence that Christianity existed in China as early as the seventh century A.D. (C.E.). The block was buried during a period of religious suppression, but was rediscovered in 1625 A.D. (C.E.).

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**Confucius Temple**



Photos



There are multiple temples dedicated to Confucianism across East Asia. The largest temple complex is located in Qufu, China, which is the birthplace of Confucius. The Confucius Temple was originally built in 478 B.C. (B.C.E.), a year after Confucius died. It contains more than 460 halls, pavilions, towers, and altars.



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**Kinkakuji**



**Photos**



Kinkakuji, or Temple of the Golden Pavilion, is located in Kyoto, Japan. It was originally a retirement villa for the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, but became a Buddhist temple after his death. The three-story structure overlooks a reflective pond. The top two floors are covered in gold leaf.

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**Three Gorges Dam**



**Photos**



The Three Gorges Dam is located on the Yangtze River in China. It is one of the world's largest power plants, generating as much energy as 18 nuclear power plants. During the summer monsoon, the dam holds back water to prevent flooding. During the dry season, the dam slowly releases water from its reservoir so large ships can travel along the river.

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**Wood and Ivory Carvings**



Photos



Wood and ivory carving is one of the oldest art forms in China. Some carvings are religious, but many are decorative or functional. For example, this carved ivory basket is from the Qing Dynasty, which lasted from 1725-1800 A.D. (C.E.). Ivory carvings have been found in tombs from the Shang Dynasty, which was approximately 3,500 years ago.

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**Asian Writing**



**Photos**



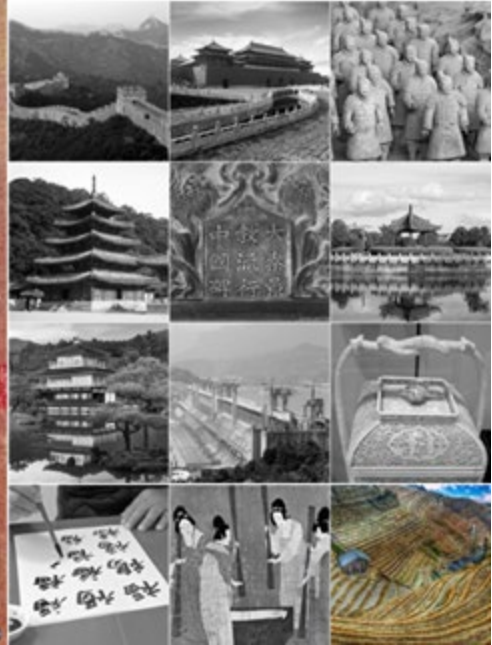
Many Asian languages use unique alphabets made up of ideograms. An ideogram is a graphic symbol that stands for a word or idea, rather than a single sound. These written languages are treated as an art form. For example, traditional Chinese calligraphy uses hand-ground ink with special brushes and paper.

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**Silk**



**Photos**



Silk has historically been an important part of East Asia's culture and economy. Silk is made from the cocoon of a silk worm. The cocoon produces a fine thread that can be used to weave fabric, clothing, and fans. It can also be used for writing or art. This silk painting from the twelfth century A.D. (C.E.) depicts a group of women processing silk.

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**Terraced Rice Fields**



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Agricultural terracing is a farming method that has been used in East Asia for thousands of years. Sloped land is altered to create flat steps, or terraces, for growing crops like rice. This practice helps conserve water for crops, while decreasing erosion and runoff.