MISSION WORKBOOK • CEFR A2–B1 • AGES 7–14

Floating Cities: Zheng He's Colossal Treasure Ships

The Giraffe & Nine-Masted Fleet Mystery | 鄭和的巨型寶船與長頸鹿之謎

SCAN TO PLAY AUDIO
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EXPEDITION MAP — Where Are We Landing? 古代中國時空座標

Ming Dynasty (1405–1433 AD)

1405 AD • 32°N, 118°E

📍 **Nanjing Longjiang Shipyard & Indian Ocean** (南京龍江造船廠與印度洋古航道)

[Lin]: "Admiral Zheng He launched 7 epic voyages with 300+ ships and 28,000 sailors—a century before Columbus!"

[Leo]: "Wait! Floating vegetable gardens on deck to prevent pirate scurvy? And they found a real mythical Qilin?!"

WARM-UP — Before You Warp: Predict True or False! 聽前真假預測

Guess the answers before listening to today's episode! (聽故事前先猜猜看！)

1. Zheng He's largest Treasure Ships were longer than a football field (~400 feet).
TRUEFALSE

2. The Chinese fleet sailed to conquer and colonize foreign nations by force.
TRUEFALSE

3. The mysterious creature brought back from Africa was an African giraffe.
TRUEFALSE

READING PASSAGE

The Skyscraper Fleets of the Ming Dynasty

明朝海上摩天大樓：鄭和九桅寶船傳奇

A ~230-word standalone story covering core historical facts and all 12 vocabulary words. Works with or without audio! **（約 230 詞獨立精讀短文，底線標記全部 12 個核心單字，無音響設備亦可獨立教學）。**

Nearly a century before European explorers crossed the Atlantic, China launched the greatest maritime fleet the ancient world had ever seen. Between 1405 and 1433, Admiral Zheng He commanded seven epic **voyages** across the Indian Ocean, reaching Southeast Asia, India, Arabia, and the eastern coast of Africa. His flagship, known as the 'Baochuan' or Treasure Ship, was truly **colossal**. Measuring up to 400 feet long with nine towering masts, each ship was like a floating citadel holding over a thousand crew members. Unlike later conquerors, Zheng He's primary mission was peaceful **diplomacy**. Sent by Emperor Yongle, his massive **fleet** carried holds packed with shimmering Chinese silk, precious teas, and **exquisite** porcelain. In return, foreign kingdoms sent exotic spices, rare gemstones, and royal **tribute**. To keep 28,000 crew members healthy on multi-year journeys, Chinese shipwrights pioneered brilliant technology: **watertight** bulkheads to prevent sinking, magnetic compass **navigation**, and even deck tub gardens growing bean sprouts to cure deadly **scurvy**. In 1414, when an African **ambassador** presented Zheng He with a live giraffe, the imperial court marveled in awe, convinced they had welcomed the sacred, **mythical** Qilin into the Middle Kingdom.

SCIENCE FACT

Watertight Bulkheads & Deck Farms 水密隔艙與海上菜園黑科技

Chinese shipbuilders divided ship hulls into independent watertight compartments. If rocks punctured one section, water couldn't flood the rest! Meanwhile, fresh vitamin-C bean sprouts grown on deck stopped scurvy 300 years before European navies solved it.

READ & SPOT

Quick Story Check 閱讀關鍵線索任務

- Spot the 3 main luxury goods China traded: Silk, tea, and porcelain.
- Find how long the largest Baochuan was: ~400 feet long with 9 masts.
- Locate why Chinese sailors grew bean sprouts: To prevent scurvy with fresh Vitamin C.

LISTENING LOG

5-Act Time-Travel Mission Notes 五幕式聽力探險筆記

Listen to EP02 (use **0.8x speed** on curioquestkids.com if you want extra thinking time!) and record key details. **(邊聽播客邊記錄每一幕關鍵線索，官網播放器支援 0.8x 慢速跟聽)。**

Act 1 • Floating Giants of the Sea 海上的漂浮巨獸 00:00
How did China's 1405 fleet compare in size to European ships 100 years later?

Act 2 • Inside the 9-Masted Baochuan 登上九桅巨型寶船 02:04
What dual-purpose technologies made the Baochuan safe for thousands of crew members?

Act 3 • The Giraffe & Qilin Mystery 長頸鹿變麒麟之謎 04:49
Why did Emperor Yongle and court scholars believe the African giraffe was a sacred Qilin?

Act 4 • Word Power-Ups & Ship Tech 核心英語詞彙充電 08:15
Which 3 vocabulary power-ups did Lin and Leo emphasize during their harbor debrief?

Act 5 • Time Machine Quiz Challenge 時光機問答挑戰 10:05
What is the single most important lesson from Zheng He's peaceful voyages?

PART A Complete the Field Report (Cloze) 關鍵詞聽讀填空

Choose words from the word bank to complete Leo's mission debrief. **(從單字庫中選出正確單字填入空格)**

colossal diplomacy watertight scurvy ambassador exquisite

In 1405, Admiral Zheng He commanded a (1) _____ fleet of over 300 ships. His goal was peaceful (2) _____, trading (3) _____ porcelain for spices. To survive typhoons, shipbuilders engineered (4) _____ compartments that stopped flooding, while deck gardens prevented deadly (5) _____. When an East African (6) _____ gifted a giraffe, Emperor Yongle rejoiced!

PART B Timeline Detective (Order 1–4) 歷史事件先後排序

Number the chronological events from 1 (earliest) to 4 (latest). **(依歷史發生順序填入數字 1 到 4)**

[ ] **Emperor Yongle commissions the Longjiang shipyards to construct 300+ ships.**

[ ] **Zheng He's first expedition departs Suzhou port for Calicut, India.**

[ ] **The fleet reaches Malindi in East Africa and receives a giraffe as a tribute gift.**

[ ] **The giraffe arrives at Beijing court and is celebrated as the mythical Qilin.**

WORD BANK 12 Core Mission Words 12 個核心歷史英語詞彙

Master these 12 power words to boost your historical reading, listening, and debate writing! **(掌握這 12 個核心詞彙，全面提升聽說讀寫實力)**

colossal adj. · /kəˈlɒs.əl/
Extremely large, massive, or gigantic in size.
"The 400-foot treasure ship looked colossal next to ordinary fishing boats."
✦ 中文釋義：巨大的・龐大的

diplomacy n. · /dɪˈploʊ.mə.si/
Managing international relations peacefully through negotiation.
"Zheng He practiced diplomacy by trading silk and tea instead of invading."
✦ 中文釋義：外交・和平往來

voyage n. · /ˈvɔɪ.ɪdʒ/
A long journey traveling across the ocean or uncharted space.
"Each sea voyage lasted two full years before returning to China."
✦ 中文釋義：遠洋航行・航海

scurvy n. · /ˈskɜː.vi/
A severe disease caused by lack of fresh Vitamin C during long sea trips.
"Sailors avoided scurvy by eating fresh bean sprouts grown in tub gardens."
✦ 中文釋義：壞血病（維生素C缺乏）

exquisite adj. · /ɪkˈskwɪz.ɪt/
Extremely beautiful, delicate, and made with extraordinary craftsmanship.
"Foreign kings marveled at the exquisite blue-and-white porcelain cups."
✦ 中文釋義：精美絕倫的・雅緻的

navigation n. · /ˌnæv.ɪˈgeɪ.ʃən/
The science of charting a ship's position and directing its course.
"Navigators used magnetic compasses and star charts to cross the Indian Ocean."
✦ 中文釋義：航海技術・導航

admiral n. · /ˈæd.mɪ.rəl/
A high-ranking commanding naval officer.
"Admiral Zheng He directed hundreds of vessels using flag and bell signals."
✦ 中文釋義：海軍將領・提督

fleet n. · /fliːt/
A large organized group of ships sailing together under one command.
"The imperial fleet of 317 ships stretched across the entire horizon."
✦ 中文釋義：船隊・艦隊

watertight adj. · /ˈwɔː.tə.taɪt/
Constructed so tightly that no water can enter or leak through.
"The ship's watertight bulkheads kept it afloat even after striking coral reefs."
✦ 中文釋義：水密的・不漏水的

tribute n. · /ˈtrɪb.juːt/
Gifts or goods given by one nation to another as a sign of respect and peace.
"Rulers of over 30 countries sent tribute gifts of spices, jewels, and rare animals."
✦ 中文釋義：進貢・貢品

mythical adj. · /ˈmɪθ.ɪ.kəl/
Existing only in traditional ancient legends, myths, or folklore.
"The gentle giraffe looked like the mythical Qilin that brought peace and luck."
✦ 中文釋義：神話中的・虛構的

ambassador n. · /æmˈbæs.ə.dər/
An official diplomat sent by a country as its representative.
"The African ambassador sailed back to Beijing to meet the Chinese emperor."
✦ 中文釋義：大使・特使

PRACTICE 1 Match the Word to Its Clue 單字線索配對

1. Colossal	A. A severe illness caused by missing fresh Vitamin C at sea
2. Diplomacy	B. Dividing hulls into sealed rooms to stop flooding
3. Watertight	C. Extremely massive, like a skyscraper floating on water
4. Scurvy	D. Managing foreign relations through peaceful trade and talk
5. Tribute	E. Gifts and treasures sent to an emperor as an act of friendship

PRACTICE 2 Upgrade Leo's Field Journal 語境進階詞替換

Replace the bracketed everyday words with power words from Page 05.

- Zheng He commanded a [really big] ship. → **Upgrade:** _____
- The emperor sent gifts for peaceful [talking between countries]. → **Upgrade:** _____
- The ship had [water-proof] walls that kept it from sinking. → **Upgrade:** _____
- Sailors ate bean sprouts to prevent [the sailor illness]. → **Upgrade:** _____

PRACTICE 3 Leo's Code Scramble & Power Sentence 解碼與造句

A group of ships sailing together (E E F L T) → _____

A long ocean journey (A E G O V Y) → _____

Highest naval commander (A A D I L M R) → _____

The mythical Chinese beast resembling a giraffe (I I L N Q) → _____

Write your own power sentence using at least one new mission word:

PART A History Detective Quiz 深度理解選擇題

1. What was the primary purpose of Zheng He's seven epic voyages?

A. To conquer and colonize foreign lands　　B. To demonstrate Chinese prestige and conduct peaceful diplomacy

C. To find a secret passage to Europe　　D. To search for pirate treasure

2. How did Ming shipwrights prevent ships from sinking if the hull hit a rock?

A. They built independent watertight bulkheads　　B. They made the entire ship out of iron

C. They carried hundreds of reserve lifeboats　　D. They glued sponges around the bottom

3. Why did the imperial court mistake a giraffe for the mythical Qilin?

A. It had wings and breathed smoke　　B. It had a long neck, dappled coat, and gentle, peaceful demeanor

C. It spoke ancient Chinese poems　　D. Zheng He painted dragon scales on it

4. How did Zheng He's sailors prevent the deadly disease scurvy on long trips?

A. They drank ocean saltwater every day　　B. They ate vitamin-C-rich fresh bean sprouts grown in deck tub gardens

C. They slept 14 hours every night　　D. They traded for dried salted fish

PART B Explain in Your Own Words 開放式簡答思考題

✦ **Why was peaceful diplomacy more beneficial to the Ming Dynasty than military conquest?**

✦ **If you had to design a floating garden on a ship today, which 3 crops would you grow and why?**

CRITICAL THINKING & OPINION WRITING • CCSS W.4.1 / CEFR B1

Should the Ming Dynasty Have Continued Zheng He's Great Maritime Voyages?

After 1433, Ming scholars ordered the fleet halted and records sealed, arguing the voyages were too expensive and China should focus on northern borders and agriculture. Weigh both sides! **明朝應當繼續大航海，還是終止遠洋艦隊以節約國力?**

STEP 1 Weigh Both Sides (Evidence T-Chart) 正反證據分析

YES — Keep Sailing & Exploring (繼續遠航派)

- Global trade networks brought exotic medicines, spices, and immense diplomatic influence across 30+ nations.
- Chinese naval technology (compass, watertight hulls, cartography) led the world and fostered unmatched scientific innovation.

NO — Focus on Defense & Farming (休養生息派)

- Building 300+ colossal ships drained millions of silver coins and forced thousands of peasants into exhausting timber labor.
- Northern nomadic borders faced serious military threats, requiring troop funding and wall reinforcements instead of sea pageants.

STEP 2 Write Your Historian's Verdict 撰寫歷史觀點短文

Lin's Opinion Starters: *"In my opinion, ... because ..."* · *"Evidence shows that ..."* · *"While some argue ..., I believe ..."*

Writing Checklist: [ ] Clear opinion stated [ ] 2 historical reasons with "because" [ ] Concluding statement [ ] Capital letters & periods

MUSEUM LAB

Design Admiral Zheng He's Flagship Baochuan! 設計鄭和九桅寶船旗艦!

Draw all 9 towering batten sails, add deck vegetable tubs, and sketch the African Giraffe greeting the crew!



Historical Design Specs

1. **Color Palette:** Mineral pigment highlights.
2. **Special Feature:** Add tools, sails, or banners.
3. **Mission Symbol:** Hidden dynastic crest.

Explorer Tip

Use fine-tip markers or colored pencils to bring your ancient artifact to life!

MING DYNASTY • 1405 AD

★

EP02 • BAOCHUAN FLEET & QILIN SEAL

✂ CUTOUT EXPLORER PASSPORT SEAL • 探險護照專屬實體印章

Congratulations, Time-Traveler! Cut along the dashed border and glue this official seal into your CurioQuest Passport. **（恭喜完成任務！沿虛線剪下這枚官方印章並貼入你的探險護照）。**

Explorer Signature: _____

ADULT COACHING GUIDE • ZERO PREP

Standards, Complete Answer Key & Writing Models

CEFR A2–B1 CCSS Aligned

教學對標、完整解答與分級範文指南

Standards Alignment:

- **CEFR A2–B1:** Narrative comprehension & reasoned opinion writing.
- **CCSS:** SL.4.2 (Listening), RI.4.1 (Evidence), L.4.6 (Vocab), W.4.1 (Opinion).

3-Day Pacing Suggestion:

- **Day 1:** P1 Warm-up → Listen/P2 Reading → P3 Notes.
- **Day 2:** P4 Cloze/Timeline → P5–P6 Vocab → P7 Quiz.
- **Day 3:** P8 Debate Essay → P9 Museum Lab & Seal!

COMPLETE ANSWER KEY

P1 Warm-Up: 1-T, 2-F, 3-T.
P4 Cloze: (1) colossal, (2) diplomacy, (3) watertight, (4) scurvy, (5) ambassador, (6) exquisite.
P4 Timeline: A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4.
P6 Match: 1-C, 2-D, 3-B, 4-A, 5-E.
P6 Upgrade: 1. colossal, 2. diplomacy, 3. watertight, 4. scurvy.
P7 MCQ: 1-B, 2-A, 3-B, 4-B.

DIFFERENTIATED WRITING MODELS (P8):

Level 1 (CEFR A2 / Grades 3–5): "In my opinion, China should have continued Zheng He's voyages. First, the colossal fleet made friends with over 30 countries through peaceful diplomacy. Second, sailors traded silk and tea for exotic spices and learned amazing navigation skills. Even though it cost silver, sharing culture made the world safer."

Level 2 (CEFR B1 / Grades 6–8): "From a historian's perspective, halting Zheng He's maritime expeditions in 1433 was a pivotal turning point in world history. While conservative court officials correctly noted the astronomical financial burden and northern border vulnerabilities, abandoning oceanic diplomacy surrendered China's undisputed naval supremacy. Had the Ming court sustained a balanced, commercial trade model rather than ceremonial tribute, China could have shaped the global Age of Discovery with peaceful diplomacy instead of European colonial conquest."

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