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

The Great Silk Smugglers: How China Kept the World's Best Secret

The Silk Road Monopoly & The Secret of Sericulture | 絲綢之路的秘密：古代中國如何保守世界頂級商機

SCAN TO PLAY AUDIO
curioquestkids.com

EXPEDITION MAP — Where Are We Landing? 古代中國時空座標

Han Dynasty (138 BC – 200 AD)

138 BC • 34°N, 108°E

📍 **Chang'an, Dunhuang Jade Gate & Taklamakan Desert** (長安起點、敦煌玉門關與西域絲路綠洲)

[Lin]: "Imagine a secret fabric so soft, glowing, and prized that ancient Romans traded pure gold for its exact weight!"

[Leo]: "China kept the secret of making silk for over a thousand years! Reveal the recipe and you lost your head! How did worms travel?"

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. In ancient Rome, pure Chinese silk was so valuable that it was literally traded for its equal weight in gold.
TRUEFALSE

2. Ancient foreigners knew from the start that silk was spun by caterpillars from mulberry leaves.
TRUEFALSE

3. Anyone caught trying to smuggle silkworm eggs or mulberry seeds out of China faced the death penalty.
TRUEFALSE

READING PASSAGE

The Golden Threads of the Ancient Silk Road

點絲成金：漢代絲綢之路與最高國家機密

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）。**

Two thousand years ago, a mysterious fabric arrived in the glittering markets of Rome and Alexandria. Shimmering in sunlight and smooth as running water, this **luxury** material was pure Chinese **silk**. Wealthy senators paid its weight in gold, yet no outsider knew how it was created. Roman scholars guessed it was combed from magical forest trees! In reality, China had perfected sericulture: harvesting delicate cocoons spun by domestic silkworms feeding exclusively on white **mulberry** leaves. To protect this economic miracle, the Han court enforced the ultimate state **secret**. Imperial law decreed that anyone attempting to **smuggle** live silkworms or seeds across the border faced execution. At remote desert outposts like the Jade Gate, heavily armed frontier soldiers would thoroughly **guard** every traveler. Meanwhile, hardy camel **caravan** teams navigated shifting Taklamakan dunes, moving from one mountain **oasis** to the next across 4,000 miles of terrain. Silk was China's most prized **export** and supreme diplomatic **treasure**. For over a millennium, this strict **penalty** kept the secret intact, until clever travelers allegedly concealed live eggs in hollowed walking canes and royal headdresses, forever changing the global textile trade.

SCIENCE FACT

The Micro-Engineering of Silkworm Silk　一根蠶絲一千米：生物材料黑科技

A single silkworm cocoon produces a continuous strand of protein fiber up to 1,000 meters (3,000 feet) long! Triangular protein prisms reflect light like gemstones, giving silk its natural luminous sheen and incredible tensile strength.

READ & SPOT

Quick Story Check　閱讀關鍵線索任務

- Spot what Romans thought silk came from: Tree leaves or desert flower down.
- Find what silkworms eat: Fresh leaves from the white mulberry tree.
- Locate the desert gate that guarded travelers: The Jade Gate (玉門關).

LISTENING LOG

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

Listen to EP05 (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 • The Golden Thread Hook 價值等重黃金的神秘布料 — 00:00
Why were Roman emperors and senators so obsessed with Chinese silk?

Act 2 • Zhang Qian's Desert Journey 張騫出使西域的綠洲冒險 — 02:14
What hardships did Han diplomat Zhang Qian face when mapping the Silk Road?

Act 3 • The Silkworm Border Secret 嚴守千年的蠶繭邊境機密 — 05:14
Why did the Han court impose the death penalty on anyone smuggling silkworm eggs?

Act 4 • Word Power-Ups & Big Reveal 核心詞彙與真相大揭曉 — 08:58
How did legend claim silkworm eggs were finally smuggled across borders centuries later?

Act 5 • Time Machine Quiz & Return 時光機問答與返航 — 10:57
How did the Silk Road connect distant civilizations through commerce and idea exchange?

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)**

silk mulberry smuggle caravan export penalty

Ancient China produced shimmering (1) _____ from caterpillars that ate fresh (2) _____ leaves. To keep its monopoly, imperial law declared that anyone trying to (3) _____ eggs faced the death (4) _____. Brave merchants formed camel (5) _____ networks to (6) _____ rolls of fabric across deserts to Rome.

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)**

[ ]
China discovers sericulture and guards silkworm breeding as an imperial secret.

[ ]
Emperor Wu of Han dispatches Zhang Qian on a diplomatic mission to the Western Regions.

[ ]
The Silk Road connects Chang'an with Rome, trading silk for gold and horses.

[ ]
Silkworm eggs are smuggled in bamboo walking canes to Byzantium and the West.

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)**

smuggle v. · /ˈsmʌg.əl/
To secretly take goods or materials across a border against the law.
"Guards inspected baggage to make sure nobody tried to smuggle silkworm eggs."
✦ 中文釋義：走私・秘密偷運

silk n. · /sɪlk/
A smooth, lustrous natural fabric made from silkworm cocoons.
"Chinese silk was so rare and fine that Rome traded gold for it."
✦ 中文釋義：絲綢・蠶絲

mulberry n. · /ˈmʌl.bər.i/
A tree with broad green leaves that serve as the sole food for silkworms.
"Farmers cultivated groves of white mulberry trees to feed their hungry larvae."
✦ 中文釋義：桑樹・桑葉

export n./v. · /ˈek.spɔːt/
Goods or commodities sent to another country for sale or trade.
"Silk and porcelain were China's most profitable export goods."
✦ 中文釋義：出口商品・輸出

oasis n. · /oʊˈeɪ.sɪs/
A fertile spot in a dry desert where water, date palms, and life are found.
"The travelers rested their tired camels at the desert oasis of Dunhuang."
✦ 中文釋義：綠洲・補給點

treasure n. · /ˈtreʒ.ər/
A quantity of precious metals, gems, or other highly valuable items.
"The imperial treasure vaults overflowed with Roman glassware and jade."
✦ 中文釋義：珍寶・寶藏

caravan n. · /ˈkær.ə.væn/
A group of merchants traveling together with pack animals across dangerous deserts.
"The camel caravan marched between desert oases along the Silk Road."
✦ 中文釋義：商隊・駝隊

cocoon n. · /kəˈkuːn/
The silky protective envelope spun by caterpillars before pupation.
"Workers unwound a single continuous thread from each delicate cocoon."
✦ 中文釋義：蠶繭・繭

secret n./adj. · /ˈsiː.krət/
Something kept strictly hidden, known only to a restricted few.
"China protected the recipe for sericulture as an imperial state secret."
✦ 中文釋義：機密・秘密

merchant n. · /ˈmɜː.tʃənt/
A trader involved in buying and selling commodities for profit.
"Sogdian merchants brokered trades between Chang'an and the Mediterranean."
✦ 中文釋義：商人・貿易商

guard v./n. · /gɑːd/
To watch over and protect something valuable against theft or escape.
"Han soldiers guarded border gates to stop industrial espionage."
✦ 中文釋義：守衛・看守

penalty n. · /ˈpen.əl.ti/
A punishment imposed for breaking an official law or decree.
"The severe penalty for stealing silkworms was capital execution."
✦ 中文釋義：刑罰・處罰

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

1. Smuggle	A. A group of travelers and camels crossing deserts together
2. Caravan	B. To secretly move forbidden goods across a national border
3. Mulberry	C. A fertile green spot with water in the middle of a desert
4. Oasis	D. A tree whose leaves are the sole food for silkworms
5. Penalty	E. The legal punishment imposed for breaking an imperial law

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.

- Spies tried to [sneak out] the secret eggs. → **Upgrade:** _____
- The [camel group] traveled across the dry Taklamakan dunes. → **Upgrade:** _____
- They rested by a water spring in the desert [green spot]. → **Upgrade:** _____
- The [punishment for the crime] was extremely strict. → **Upgrade:** _____

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

Protective shell spun by a caterpillar (C C N O O O) → _____

Desert travel group with camels (A A A C N R V) → _____

Tree leaves silkworms eat (B E L M R R U Y) → _____

To transport goods in secret (E G G L M S U) → _____

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. Why was Chinese silk worth its weight in gold in ancient Rome?

A. It was made from real gold threads
B. Outsiders had no idea how to produce it and the supply was scarce
C. It was magnetic and cured headaches
D. Roman merchants manufactured it in secret

2. What did silkworms eat to produce high-grade silk fibers?

A. Desert cactus needles
B. Fresh leaves from white mulberry trees
C. Boiled rice grains
D. Dried rose petals

3. What was the penalty for smuggling silkworm eggs out of China under Han law?

A. Paying a fine of 10 gold coins
B. Death penalty / execution
C. Sweeping the Great Wall for one year
D. Being banned from eating rice

4. How did legend claim silkworm eggs were finally smuggled to the Byzantine Empire?

A. In hollowed-out bamboo walking canes carried by traveling monks
B. Hidden inside hollow dragon statues
C. Flown across the desert by carrier pigeons
D. Baked inside loaves of bread

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

✦ **Why was the Silk Road more important for sharing ideas and culture than just trading fabrics?**

✦ **If you had a secret invention today, would you share it with the world or keep it a secret? Why?**

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

Was China Justified in Keeping the Silk Secret Under Penalty of Death?

For over a thousand years, China treated sericulture as a national monopoly. Was strict intellectual property protection essential for economic security, or did it slow global human progress? **古代國家該不該以死刑保護頂級核心技術機密?**

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

YES — Protecting National Economic Security (國家經濟命脈派)

- Silk funded the Han Dynasty's border defenses, public granaries, and foreign alliances, creating thousands of jobs for ordinary farming families.
- Without copyright laws, keeping trade secrets was the only way ancient inventors could be rewarded for centuries of agricultural research.

NO — Knowledge Should Benefit All Humanity (技術開放共享派)

- Executing people for carrying silkworms was an excessively brutal law that restricted scientific exchange.
- Once silk production spread to Persia, Byzantium, and India, it improved textile quality and reduced poverty across the entire Eurasian continent.

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 ..."*

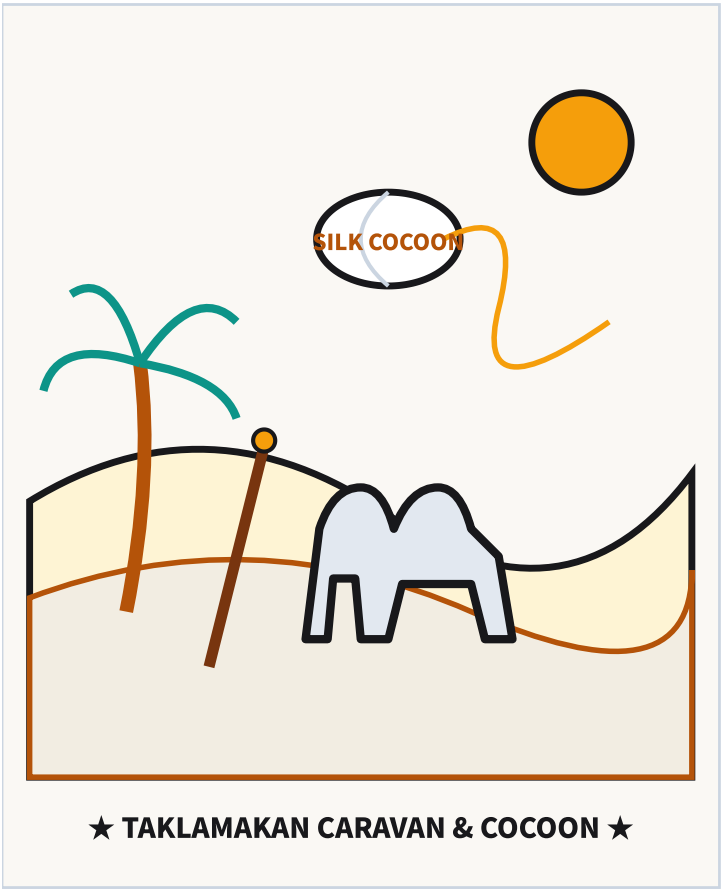
Writing Checklist: [ ] Clear opinion stated [ ] 2 historical reasons with "because" [ ] Concluding statement [ ] Capital letters & periods

MUSEUM LAB

Map the Silk Road & Design the Secret Bamboo Cane!

繪製絲路駝隊與藏匿蠶繭的神秘竹杖!

Draw the desert sand dunes, a camel caravan resting at an oasis, a silkworm feeding on mulberry leaves, and the hollow walking stick!



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!

HAN DYNASTY • 138 BC

★

EP05 • SILK ROAD GOLDEN COCOON 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) silk, (2) mulberry, (3) smuggle, (4) caravan, (5) export, (6) penalty.
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. smuggle, 2. caravan, 3. oasis, 4. penalty.
P7 MCQ: 1-B, 2-B, 3-B, 4-A.

DIFFERENTIATED WRITING MODELS (P8):

Level 1 (CEFR A2 / Grades 3–5): "In my opinion, protecting the silk secret was very important for ancient China. The silk trade brought gold, horses, and food to the country. Many farmers worked hard to raise silkworms on mulberry trees. Keeping the secret safe helped the empire survive and build strong cities."

Level 2 (CEFR B1 / Grades 6–8): "From an economic perspective, ancient China's sericulture monopoly was one of the earliest examples of strategic intellectual property enforcement. Because ancient legal systems lacked international patent treaties, state secrecy under penalty of death was the only mechanism to safeguard an industry that financed national infrastructure and the Silk Road. However, knowledge diffusion is ultimately inevitable. When silkworms were eventually smuggled across borders, the world became more interconnected, proving that trade secrets may create temporary empires, but shared innovation drives global civilizational growth."

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