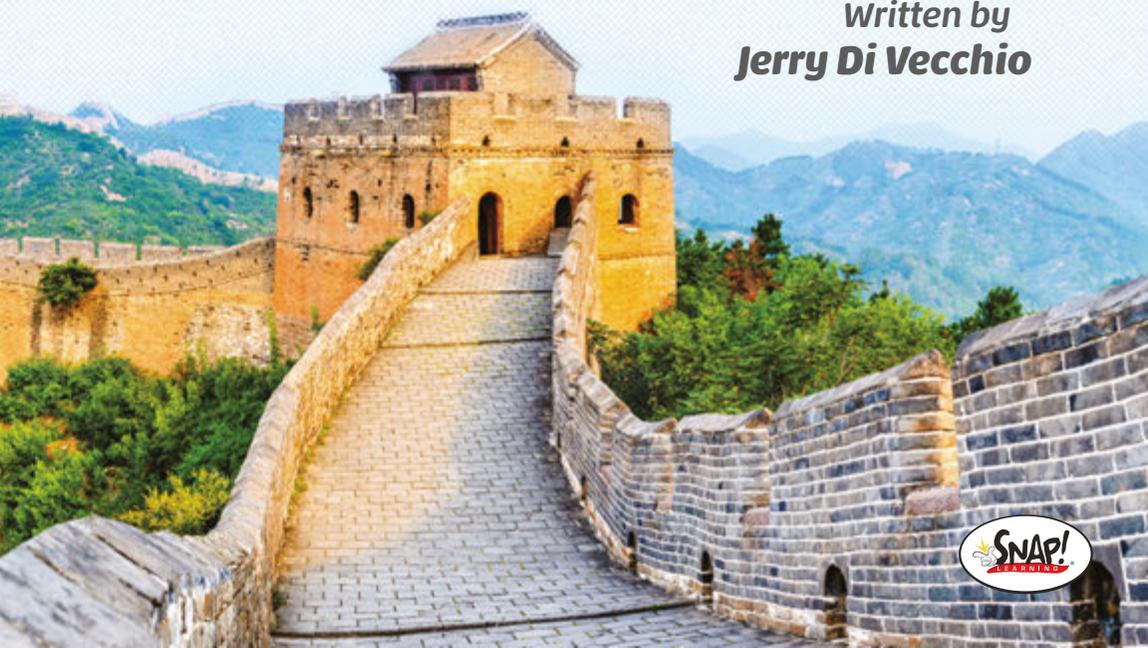


THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA:

Building an Empire

Written by
Jerry Di Vecchio





The Great Wall of China:
Building an Empire

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STRUCTURED GUIDED READING

BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Great Wall of China



BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

search engine



VOCABULARY



unify

It's the Great Wall of China, and it has defined and unified an entire country.



empire

The leader who had it built years ago started with a vision of building a Chinese empire.



ambitious

An ambitious king rose to power during the Qin dynasty.



conquer

In 1276, China was conquered by Mongols.

VOCABULARY



superlative

I'm just a guy named Rusty who enjoys superlatives: the fastest, tallest, scariest, et cetera.



visible

He assumes the wall is visible from space because it's so enormous.



verify

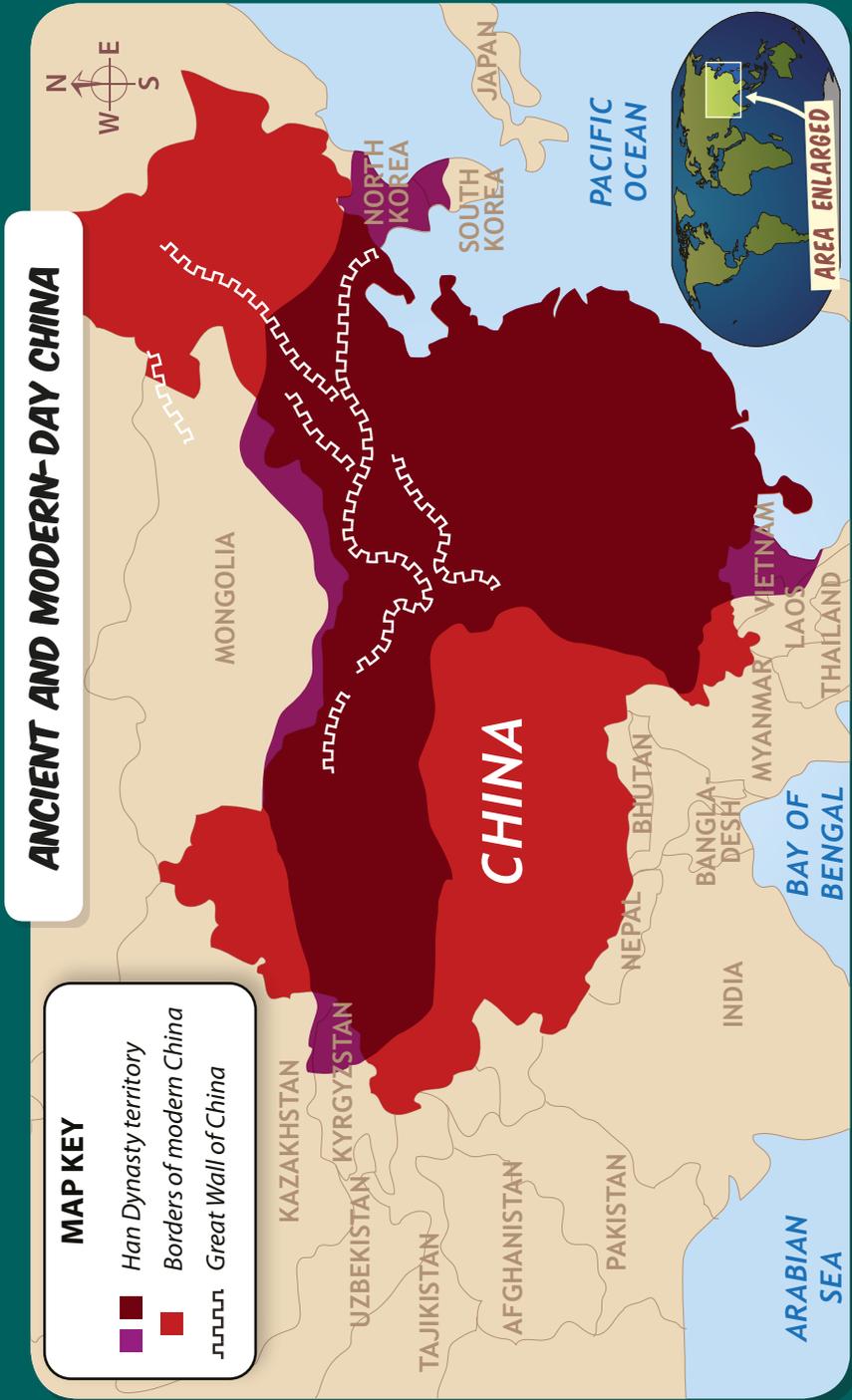
How do you even verify that something is the "scariest," anyway?



witness

I visited China seven years ago, and like millions of other visitors, I simply had to witness the wall for myself.

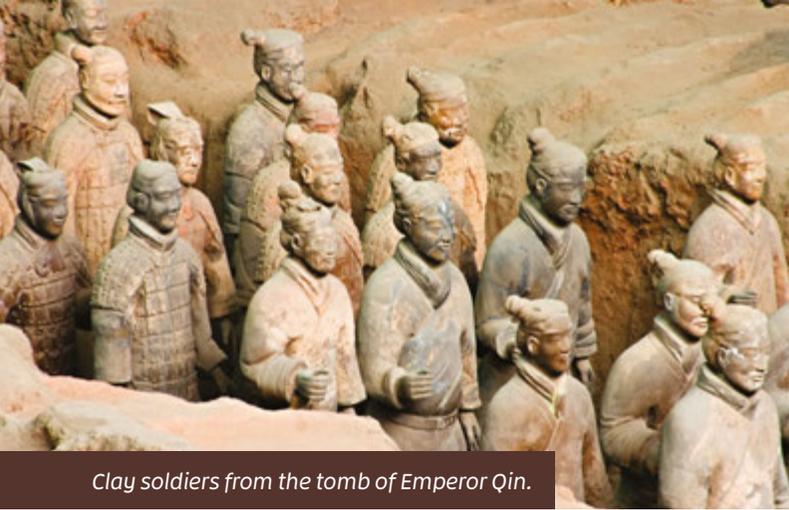
MAPS AND STUFF



Introduction

- 1 It towers over the countryside, **majestic** and powerful. It keeps watch over a great nation. It inspires visitors who travel from all over the world to observe its breathtaking beauty. It is, believe it or not, a wall.
- 2 This isn't just any old wall. It's the Great Wall of China, and it has defined and unified an entire country. The leader who had it built years ago started with a vision of building a Chinese empire. Before there were such things as chain-link fences or automatic sliding doors, the emperor protected his empire using the resources that were available.
- 3 The Great Wall's twists and turns – and starts and stops – tell the story of China over many centuries. It actually took about 2,000 years to complete construction of the wall. Today, the Great Wall of China still stands tall and proud as the largest structure on Earth. Some might say that the emperor built the Great Wall. But you could argue instead that the Great Wall built an empire.

The Great Wall of China



Clay soldiers from the tomb of Emperor Qin.



FUN FACT!

Archaeologists didn't discover Emperor Qin's tomb until 1974. They've dug up 8,000 life-size clay soldiers there.

Who Built the Great Wall?

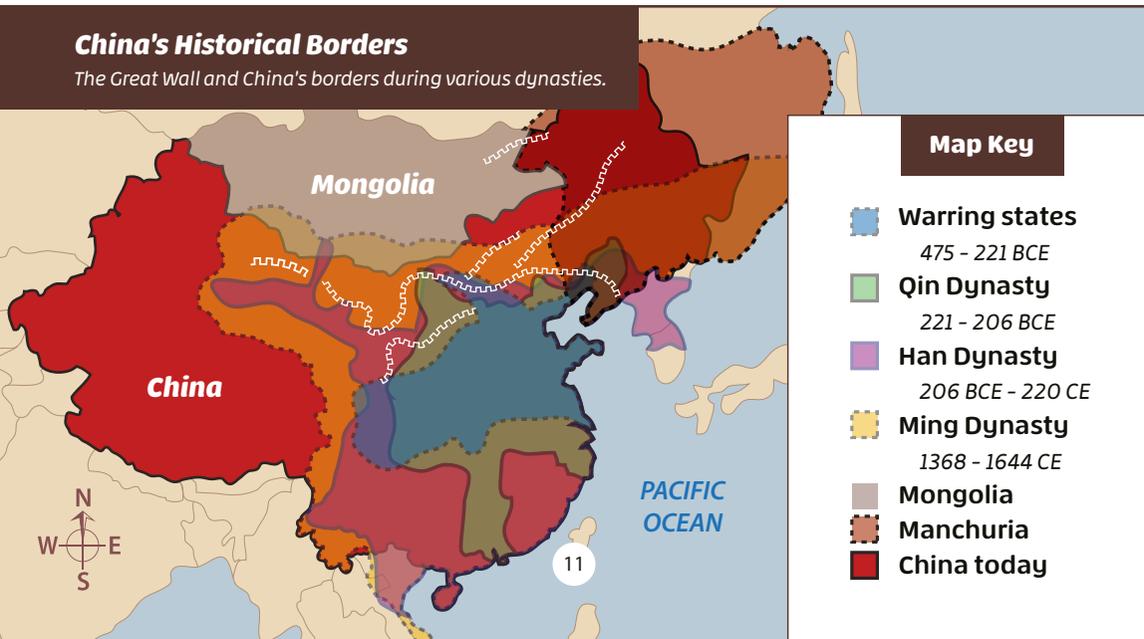
- 4 The wall wasn't constructed all at once, and it isn't a single wall. It's a series of walls known together as the Great Wall. Ancient China once consisted of seven **warring** kingdoms, and the first segments of the wall separated them.
- 5 An ambitious king rose to power during the Qin (CHIN) dynasty. Shi Huangdi (SHEE hwang-DEE) defeated the warring kingdoms and crowned himself China's first emperor, Emperor Qin, in 221 BCE.
- 6 After he unified these kingdoms as one empire, he ordered a long wall to be built across the empire's northern border. The new empire could use the wall to keep out invading warriors. The Great Wall was just one of Emperor Qin's projects. He also had a huge tomb constructed.
- 7 Emperor Qin ruled until 210 BCE. The Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) continued building the wall as China grew. In 1276, China was conquered by Mongols. All of China was now ruled by foreigners. Most of the wall was restored and expanded later during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644).

Where is the Great Wall?

- Emperor Qin built the Great Wall as a **barricade** against enemies along northern borders. The wall extended from the eastern coast far to the west, crossing grasslands, valleys, and mountains. Some mountains were extremely steep and **rugged**. Shorter sections of wall branched off the main structure. These were designed to protect cities and specific regions. On a map, the wall resembles a gigantic dragon.
- China is bordered on the east by open seas, but its borders to the north, west, and south are on land. These land borders have shifted numerous times throughout history, and the course of the Great Wall has changed along with them.
- For centuries, the Great Wall protected China. The first attackers came from Mongolia, and the last were from Manchuria. The Mongols and the Manchurians eventually became rulers, but China just got bigger as a result. Eventually, the entire Great Wall ended up inside China. At that point, the wall no longer protected China's borders.

China's Historical Borders

The Great Wall and China's borders during various dynasties.



How was the Great Wall Built?

- 11 The wall's first pieces consisted of packed earth, gravel, and materials that weathered and wore away. Emperor Qin demanded a stronger, more durable structure. Bricks, mortar, and stones were used to make the wall taller, wider, and longer lasting.
- 12 Emperor Qin's wall gradually fell apart. Remains of the wall were restored and incorporated into newer structures by the rulers who followed Emperor Qin. Most of the current wall, which is more than 5,000 miles long, was built during the Ming dynasty.
- 13 Refined building techniques produced a more impressive wall. The wall is about 25 feet high and about 20 feet wide. It's really an elevated roadway. It is said that 10 soldiers could march **abreast** and wheeled wagons could move swiftly on the wall road.
- 14 The Great Wall became an architectural wonder. It is China's most popular attraction, and millions of visitors have walked the wall.



Part of the Great Wall of China showing some of its watch towers.

Mail

COMPOSE

INBOX

STARRED

SENT

TRASH

15

Hi Daniel, I don't understand how we're supposed to finish this entire report on the Great Wall of China by tomorrow. That's awesome that you've already completed your section of our report about how the wall wasn't always secure. It's hilarious that some invaders offered bribes to guards in order to get past the wall.

16

But I need interesting information of my own, and I need it fast. I want a better grade in Mrs. Walton's class, and I'm just not good at doing research for my reports and presentations.

17

I heard about some rumor that the Great Wall of China is the only manmade structure that you can see from space. I don't know if that's true, but I need to find something ... anything.

18

Maybe if I get on the computer now and search online, I can get some material for our report. I'm going to start searching for some websites and I'll e-mail you what I find. I really hope this works.

-Wally

Rusty's Book of Records

- [Home](#)
- [The Fastest](#)
- [The Tallest](#)
- [The Scariest](#)
- [The Biggest](#)
- [About Me](#)

19 **Rusty's Book of Records** discusses the world's weirdest, wildest facts. This isn't my full-time job. I'm just a guy named Rusty who enjoys superlatives: the fastest, tallest, scariest, et cetera.

The Great Wall of China

20



The Great Wall of China is the only manmade structure on Earth that you can see from space. It's true. Astronauts have seen Earth when they've landed on the

moon. Returning astronauts have reported their experiences. Neil Armstrong landed on the moon in 1969 and said he couldn't see the wall. But how could you NOT see an enormous wall from space? It's the largest structure on Earth (over 5,000 miles long), and you can identify it on a satellite map of Earth. Look, I've even circled the wall for you.

NEW MESSAGE



From: **Wally B.** <wally@snaplearning.net>
To: **Daniel M.** <daniel@snaplearning.net>

21 Hi Daniel,

I'm not exactly sure if I should believe this website. I wonder if Rusty's just making **assumptions**. He assumes the wall is visible from space because it's so enormous, but Rusty isn't a full-time researcher or anything ... just some guy. (How do you even verify that something is the "scariest," anyway?)

SNAP! Blog:

My Trip to the Great Wall of China

ABOUT ME

MY OTHER TRAVELS

FAVORITE PLACES

PHOTOS

My Trip to the Great Wall



- 22 The Great Wall of China is such an extraordinary sight. I visited China seven years ago as part of an academic research team from Utah studying the origins of the Chinese Laborers who constructed the Transcontinental Railroad. However, like millions of other visitors, I simply had to witness the wall for myself as a simple tourist.
- 23 I read that up to a million men constructed the wall for Emperor Qin, and many died on the job. The workers didn't have any choice about whether to work on the project. The job was often punishment for men who had committed crimes.
- 24 I was surprised to see that there were different materials used to construct the wall. When I started walking, it was all brick, and then by the end I was at a section that had gravel. I would definitely go back someday if I could.

NEW MESSAGE



From: **Wally B.** <wally@snaplearning.net>

To: **Daniel M.** <daniel@snaplearning.net>

- 25 Obviously, this woman has actually visited the Great Wall of China. I think I can believe at least some of what she says. But this doesn't tell me anything about whether you can see the wall from space. This Internet searching can be so frustrating!

SEND

Visible from the Moon?



26 The Great Wall of China is a great feat of human achievement. You might believe that you can see it from space. Not so fast ... it's a notorious rumor that has spread like wildfire.



Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei acknowledged that he couldn't see the wall when he went into space. Satellite images from the United States Space Exploration Agency show how difficult it is to look for the wall. The wall is thousands of miles long, but it's also very narrow. Furthermore, the wall was built with materials from the surrounding area. Sections cannot be distinguished because they are a similar color to the rest of the land.

27

28 Basically, you can't locate the wall from space unless you know what you're looking for. However, from space you can see the nighttime lights from cities and other manmade landmarks, like the pyramids in Egypt.

NEW MESSAGE



From: **Wally B.** <wally@snaplearning.net>
To: **Daniel M.** <daniel@snaplearning.net>

29 This seems more promising. I'll have to figure out how to compile the information from all these websites, but I think I have enough information.

-Wally

Mail

COMPOSE

INBOX

STARRED

SENT

TRASH

30



From: **Wally B.** <wally@snaplearning.net>

Subject: **My part of the report**

Date: December 17, 2011

To: **Daniel M.** <daniel@snaplearning.net>

Hi Daniel,

I finally found some information online, so here's my part that you can add to our report. Can you believe I'm finally done after all this research?

-Wally

31

There's a popular rumor that the Great Wall of China is visible from space. There is an easy answer to this misconception: You can't see the wall from space with the unaided eye. However, the reasons for this answer are more complicated.

32

The wall is Earth's largest manmade structure. It's thousands of miles long, but it's extremely narrow. If you know where the wall is on Earth, of course you can identify it more easily on satellite maps. The problem is that you won't notice the wall if you don't know that it's in China.

33

Ironically, you can't locate this huge manmade structure from space, but you can identify much smaller landmarks, including city lights. But we celebrate the Great Wall of China anyway as the symbol of an empire and as one of mankind's greatest accomplishments.

GLOSSARY

abreast – side by side

assumption – something that is believed to be true
without proof

barricade – a barrier or obstacle

bribe – a gift or money given to influence someone

compile – to collect from more than one source

feat – an act of great skill

majestic – impressive, showing power or dignity

rugged – jagged, having a rough surface

satellite – from an object orbiting Earth

warring – at war, in conflict

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Photos: Page 1, 9, 10, 12, 15 (www.istockphoto.com), 14 (maps.google.com), 16 (www.nasa.gov), 6, 10 ([wiki commons](http://wiki.commons)).

WORDS WITH THE MOST COMMON AFFIXES AND GREEK/LATIN ROOTS

cred

means to believe or trust

port

means to carry

pop/ popul

means people

credible

important

accredited

department

unaccredited

insupportable

credentials

portfolio

discredited

portable

incredible

reporting

incredulous

popularity

credibility

populate

imports

population

exported

unpopular

rapport

repopulate

transportation

overpopulated

transportable



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