

Historian's tip # 4: Historians use maps to extract and infer a variety of information.

Today's investigation: **Maps of China**

Outcome of the investigation: Our historians will be able to

1. look at a topographical map and formulate reasons why the ancient Chinese may have chosen the Yellow River Valley to establish farming settlements.
2. use a map and map key to extract information
3. infer information about China by looking at a border map, population map, linguistic map, ethnicity map, and topographical map.

Vocabulary: border
linguistics
ethnic / ethnicity
topography / topographical
agriculture / agricultural

Materials: border map of China
US/ China size comparison map
linguistic map of China
ethnicity map of China
topographical map of China
agricultural map of China
graphic organizer for map information

Mini lesson: Historians learn different types of information from different types of maps. Let's look at this topographical map. (Explain key, point out various topographical features). When we look at a map we can write down the facts right in front of our eyes, such as "China has mountains, flat places rivers." We can also write down what we can infer from the map. When we infer, we try to figure out the answer to a question even though it isn't right in front of our eyes. For example, we can think about where the earliest farmers might have wanted to settle in China. The map doesn't give us an answer, but it gives up some areas to think about. In your historian's notebook, stop and jot where you think the best places to settle might have been, and give some reasons why you think that. (Brief share, can discuss Yellow River Valley and why farmers might want to settle in a river rather than the desert or mountains).

Activities: Set up five map stations around the room. One type of map is at each station. Students take a few minutes, working collaboratively in small groups, at each map before rotating to the next map. In their historian notebooks, the students should write what seems "obvious" from the map, and what they might be able to infer from the map.

Group share: Meet together to discuss results as a group.