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| Name: |  | Date: |  |

## Purpose

In this simulation, you will learn how the Silk Roads connected Afro-Eurasian societies through the exchange of goods. The Silk Roads represented one of the first steps toward globalization, economically and culturally tying together communities from different continents and regions. By actively participating as merchants in the Silk Roads simulation, you will witness firsthand how goods and services were moved across regions and discover why individuals took financial and personal risks in order to make a profit. You will also discover how the Silk Roads affected communities, production and distribution of luxury goods, and led to an increase in networks of exchange across Afro-Eurasia.

## Process

In this activity, you will take part in three rounds of a simulation that should help you better understand the Silk Road and the impact it had on the communities of Afro-Eurasia.

You are going to act like merchants on the Silk Road. Over the course of three rounds, you will engage in trade with different regions to get a better sense of what it was like to be a part of this new, global system. The ultimate goal is for you to try to collect the most technologies, beliefs, and goods that originated outside of your home region.

Before you are assigned a region or goods to trade, your teacher will give you a quick overview of the trading zones and regions that will be involved in the simulation, as well as a preview of the different types of goods that each region has. Make sure to pay attention to this part—you will eventually be trying to trade for goods that other regions have so it’s good to preview what you might be trying to trade for. Once you’ve previewed, get into your regional groups.

### Round 1–Within Group Trading

Read Regional Guide Card #1 in your small groups, and take a few minutes to trade. While you can’t collect anything from outside your home region for this round, you should be thinking about diversifying what you have so your basic needs are met. After a few minutes of trading, discuss the questions on Regional Guide Card #1. Then, discuss the following questions with your whole class:

1. Do you have everything you need to survive?
2. Do you have “extras” or luxury goods?

### Round 2—Within Group and Next-Door Group Trading

Now, you can trade within your group and with the other group in your trade zone. You are not allowed to trade with groups outside of your trade zone. Your teacher will give you about five minutes for this round of trading. Don’t forget to try to get rid of your disease card, if you have one. Once you’re done trading, your teacher will hand out Regional Guide Card #2 to you. Read the contents and discuss the questions with your regional group. Then, discuss the following questions with your class:

1. Do you have everything you need to survive?
2. Do you have “extras” or luxury goods?
3. Was the trading difficult? Did you have trouble with communication?
4. Was it expensive or cheap? Have you been trading one for one, or trying to work out better deals?
5. Did you encounter new challenges?
6. What new things did you learn about your world?

### Round 3—Multi-Regional Trade Using Intermediaries

For this round, trade has expanded and you can now trade with regions that are further away, but you cannot leave your own trade zone and will have to use intermediaries to help you trade (for example, the next-door groups can help with groups that are farther away). It was rare for any merchant to travel the entire Silk Road. Take about five minutes to trade. Once time is up, return to your home region and separate your cards on the table. Count the number of items on your table that did not originate from your home region and write down this number. Then, your teacher will give you Regional Guide Card #3. Take a few minutes to adjust your totals based on the directions on the card and also to answer the questions on the card. Then, discuss the following questions with your class:

1. Do you have what you need to survive?
2. Do you have “extras” or luxury goods?
3. Was it difficult? Did you have trouble with communication?
4. Were the goods cheap or expensive?
5. Did you encounter new challenges?
6. How did empires both help and hinder trading?
7. What new things did you learn about your world?

### Wrapping Up

Now that the simulation is done, it’s time to share your final point totals to see how everyone fared. You’ll wrap up one of two ways: Either you’ll answer these questions in class or your teacher will have you answer them for homework:

* What is the purpose of passing the disease cards with each exchange?
* How would religions and beliefs actually have been transferred between the regions?
* How did the Silk Road impact communities at this time in history?
* How did the Silk Road impact production and distribution at this time in history?
* How did the Silk Road impact networks at this time in history?