

En

KEY STAGE

2

LEVELS

3–5

English test

Spelling Test

The Silk Trade

Teacher's version

2008

The Silk Trade

Silk is a fabric which people consider to be a luxury material. It is incredibly soft and delicate to touch and is used to make expensive articles of clothing. The Chinese first made silk in approximately 3000 BC.

When silk was first discovered it was reserved for the exclusive use of the Emperor of China. Only his close relatives and the highest dignitaries were given permission to wear silk. Gradually, silk came into more general use and ordinary men and women began to wear it as well.

It may seem amazing, but silk was also put to industrial use by the Chinese. It was used to make parts of musical instruments, fishing lines and even an unusual kind of paper, called rag paper.

Silk became _____ **precious** _____, desired by other countries and was used as a _____ **currency** _____ to trade with. From India to Italy, the exchange of silk for other goods, such as pomegranates and grapevines, was _____ **common** _____.

For centuries _____ **individuals** _____ travelled the route known as 'The Silk Road'. It linked the East to the West, and gave the _____ **opportunity** _____ for the trading of a variety of goods and ideas.

Silk production in the world has doubled _____ **during** _____ the last thirty years, _____ **despite** _____ silk being replaced by artificial _____ **fibres** _____ for some uses. China _____ **remains** _____ one of the principal exporters of silk, and with Japan is _____ **responsible** _____ for over half of the silk that is manufactured in the world today.

