Tang and Song China: Primary Source Document Packet

Directions: Read documents 1 through 9 carefully and answer the question, or questions, after each document. Be sure to address all parts of each question. This is designed to test your ability to work with and analyze historical documents.

Historical Background

The Tang and Song dynasties covered the time period from 618 to 1279 CE, a period of more than 600 years. Not only did these dynasties last a very long time, but they are also considered to be among the most outstanding and innovative of Chinese dynasties. The Tang and Song dynasties are considered a "golden age" in Chinese history. While these dynasties experienced problems from time to time, overall they managed very well to maintain unity among China's diverse people.

Document 1

Cultural Diffusion from China: 500 – 1000 CE

1. Using the title and illustration above, explain the meaning of cultural diffusion.

2. How does the illustration above support the idea that Tang and Song China experienced a golden age during this time period?
1. In general, how did the types of items traded East to West differ from the types of items traded West to East?

2. Use the information provided above and your prior knowledge to explain how successful trade along the Silk Road helped China achieve a golden age. Use at least two examples.
1. According to the chart, which levels of Chinese government have power over all people?

2. Based on what is shown in the chart, explain how there was opportunity for social mobility in this class structure using at least 2 examples.

3. Based on what is shown in the chart, how might a social hierarchy that is organized in this way contribute to political unity in China? Provide at least 2 examples.
Document 4

Economic Connections during the Golden Age of the Song

The Golden Age in Song China was a time of economic prosperity. China was getting wealthier because of economic developments that were connected in the following cause and effect relationships.

1. Wars force farmers to move south, where they grow rice
2. Commercial centers in China grow into large cities
3. Growth of trade and commerce opens up job opportunities
4. Farmers take time away from farming to make other products to sell
5. A food surplus is generated and sold at market
6. Landowners become rich enough to buy luxury items
7. Better farming technology and quick-ripening rice increase crop production

1. Arrange the statements above to reflect China's movement from a poorer, agriculturally focused country to a richer, more commercialized one. The number 1, as is already listed, represents the first step in this movement. Continue to number 2 through 7 in the spaces provided.

2. Was it agriculture, commerce or urbanization which started economic growth in China?

3. How does the sequence above indicate that China was moving toward a golden age? Explain using at least 2 examples.

Document 5

Excerpts from Emperor Taizong on Effective Government by Maintaining Military Forces

"Weapons and armor are a country's tools of violence. A warlike country, however huge and safe it may be, will end up declining and endangering its people. Military force cannot be entirely eliminated nor used all the time. Teach people military arts when they are free from farming in order to prepare them when necessary. ... Confucius said, 'Not teaching people how to fight is the same as discarding them.' Hence military might serves to benefit all China."

1. What was the Emperor's main point about the use of military force?

2. What does he think about building a military?

3. How could the Emperor's position on military force make China both strong and unified?
### Technological Inventions and Cultural Innovations of Tang and Song China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invention</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gunpowder</td>
<td>900 CE</td>
<td>Explosive powder made from a mixture of saltpeter, sulfur and charcoal</td>
<td>First used for fireworks, then later for weapons; technology spread west within 300 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnetic Compass</td>
<td>1100 CE</td>
<td>Floating magnetized needle that always points north-south; device existed in China for centuries before it was adapted by sailors for use at sea</td>
<td>Helped China become a sea power; technology spread quickly to the west</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Clock</td>
<td>725 CE</td>
<td>Clock in which machinery, driven by running water, regulated the movements</td>
<td>Early Chinese clocks were short lived; idea for mechanical clocks was carried by traders to medieval Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Money</td>
<td>960 CE</td>
<td>Paper currency issued by the Song government to replace cumbersome strings of metal coins used by merchants</td>
<td>Contributed to the development of large-scale commercial economy in China; quickly spread to the west</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcelain</td>
<td>600 CE</td>
<td>Bone-hard white ceramic made of a special clay and a mineral found only in China</td>
<td>Became a valuable export; now known as “China;” technology remained a Chinese secret for centuries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block Printing</td>
<td>735 CE</td>
<td>One block on which a whole copy of one page is created</td>
<td>Printing technology spread to Korea and Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Based on the information above, fill in this timeline to display the sequence of inventions.

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500  | 750  | 1000 | 1250 | 1500 |
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2. Choose two inventions from the chart above and explain how they helped China achieve a golden age.
Adapted Readings About the Examination System in Imperial China

"The basic justification for the Chinese civil service exams was that appointees to civil service positions were not to be chosen through special or inherited privilege, but through an individual’s own abilities. For centuries, the power of China was established through the military, often by emperors from humble origins who had toppled existing dynasties. However, once in control, these emperors soon realized that the actual governance of China would require the administrative services of thousands of bureaucrats. The civil service exam was thus a means for creating such a body of workers…"

"The examination system also helped to maintain cultural unity and agreement on basic values. The fact that the content of the examinations were uniform meant that the local scholars and would-be scholars were taught with the same values, regardless of their location across China. Even though only a small fraction of those who attempted the exams passed them and received titles, the studying and the hope of eventual success on another exam sustained the interest of those who took them. Those who failed to pass did not lose wealth or local social standing; as dedicated believers in Confucian ideals, they served, without the benefit of state appointments, as teachers, patrons of the arts, and managers of local projects…"

1. According to the first excerpt, what was needed – in addition to a powerful Emperor – to rule China successfully?

2. Using information from both excerpts above, explain how civil service exams helped China achieve a golden age using at least two examples.
1. Describe the scene depicted by the artist in the above drawing.

2. Describe THREE examples of urbanization show in this picture.

3. How might successful business activity lead to cultural diversity?