

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## World Travelers

Many well-known people were born in Italy. They became artists, poets, inventors, and explorers.

One famous Italian explorer was Marco Polo (1254-1324). His mother died when he was a small boy. He was raised by his father and his uncle. These two older men were traders. They bought and sold clothes, food, and jewels.

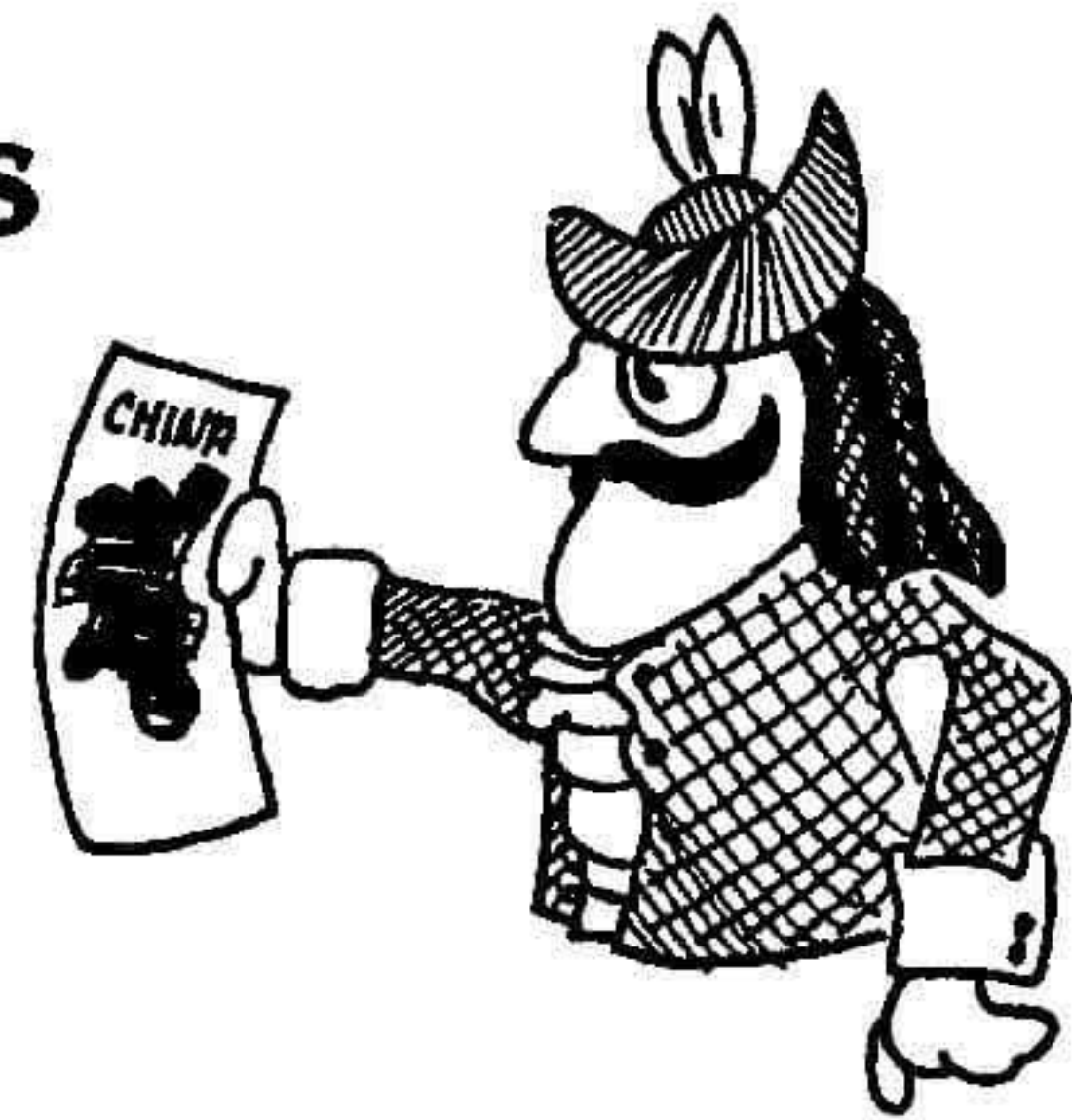
Marco's father heard about a faraway land called China. When Marco was 17 years old, his father and uncle decided to take him there. The three traveled by boat and by camel. It took them three years to reach China. When they arrived, the Chinese people gave them a nice welcome. They were taken to the home of the emperor. The emperor was like a king.

The emperor became friends with the three men from Italy. He hired Marco to run errands for him. He gave them anything they wanted.

About 18 years passed. Marco and his family became homesick for Italy. The emperor was very sorry to see them go. He sent them away with many gifts. They took silk, jewels, jade, and ivory. They also took spices, salt, and Chinese money. No one in Italy had ever tasted salt or seen paper money.

Their trip was 15,000 miles long and took three years. When they reached Italy, something went wrong. Instead of getting a hero's welcome, Marco was sent to prison for three years. During that time, he wrote a book about his trip to China.

About 200 years later, another man from Italy read Marco's book. His name was Christopher Columbus. The book made him want to see China. He set sail with three ships, looking for a shortcut to China. Instead, he discovered America.



**Write the answers on the lines. Use words from the story.**

1. where Marco Polo went
2. leader of China, like a king
3. a famous Italian explorer
4. kind of money used in China
5. type of cloth used in China
6. used to flavor food

Write the letters in the squares on the lines below to find something else the Chinese were the first to use.

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