

Teacher Guide and Answers

Grades 6-7 | Ages 11-13 | 60-minute lesson

60-Minute Classroom Flow

Minutes	Slides	Student pages	Student action
0-5	1-2	Handout 60 p.1	Make an initial claim; point to two clues; ask one question.
5-15	3-5	Handout 60 p.1	Locate sites; order Qin, Han, Ming; compare environments.
15-24	6-9	Handout 60 p.2	Name structures; infer a function; trace signals.
24-41	10-15	Handout 60 p.3; Group pp.1-2	Trace supplies; read two notes; identify problems; choose two improvements.
41-55	16-19	Group p.2; Handout 60 p.4	Report, compare reasons, then write and revise an individual answer.
55-60	20	Handout 60 p.4	Complete the exit check.

Timing rule
The minutes include directions, transitions, and writing. If discussion runs long, take one report instead of two; keep the independent response and exit check.

Preparation and Learning Goals

Essential question

Could a Wall Protect an Empire?

Students will

- Place selected Great Wall sites in broad geographic and chronological context.
- Use visible structures to explain watching, movement, protection, and signaling.
- Trace relationships among supplies, transport, guards, crossings, and border facilities.
- Support an individual judgment with specific evidence and a limit.

Open and print

Route	Slides	Individual pages	Group pages	Required printed faces
60 min	20	4 x 30 = 120	2 x 8 = 16	136

Language-support handouts replace the regular handout for selected students. Quiz, homework, and teacher pages are optional and excluded from the required totals.

Materials

Projector or large display, matching slide deck, printed handouts, pencils, and one colored pencil per student if available.

Background, Vocabulary, and Cautions

Short background

Border walls and fortifications were built, extended, connected, repaired, or abandoned across many centuries. Qin rulers connected and expanded earlier defenses; Han governments built frontier systems far into the northwest; much of the brick-and-stone wall visible near Beijing today is associated with the Ming period. A wall worked as part of a larger system that needed people, towers, gates, roads, food, equipment, administration, and clear lines of sight.

The group scenario is a fictional Ming border post, late 1500s. Crenellated wall is a supplementary term for a wall with battlements.

Pronunciation and meaning

Term	Pronunciation help	Student-friendly meaning
Qin	chin	A dynasty that unified China in 221 BCE.
Han	hahn	A dynasty that expanded frontier defenses and administration.
Ming	ming	A dynasty linked to much of the surviving wall near Beijing.
crenellation	kren-uh-LAY-shun	A high-and-low wall top that gives cover and openings.
watchtower	WATCH-tow-er	A high place for watching and signaling.
pass	pass	A controlled route through a barrier or difficult land.
inference	IN-fer-ens	An idea supported by what you observe and already know.

Common misunderstandings

- Do not describe the Great Wall as one unbroken structure built by one ruler.
- A material such as brick, stone, or tamped earth alone does not give an exact date.
- A modern photograph shows surviving remains, not how many guards served there or whether the site stopped an attack.
- The signaling diagram shows a general relay. Signal codes, distance, and speed varied.
- Road damage could delay supplies. It does not prove that a fort immediately ran out of food.
- Passes could support control and exchange, but crossing and trade did not guarantee peace.

Slides 1-2

Slide 1: The Great Wall of China (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Let students look silently, then ask for a first claim. Define empire briefly as many lands and peoples under one ruler or state. Do not correct claims yet.
Ask	Could a wall protect an empire? What in the photograph shapes your first answer?
Expected response	Accept a tentative yes, no, or conditional answer tied to something visible, such as towers, height, walkway, or terrain.
Transition	Gather two clues before adding historical context.

Source: Jakub Halun, Great Wall near Jinshanling, 29 May 2009, CC BY-SA 3.0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:20090529_Great_Wall_8185.jpg . Cropped and resized.

Slide 2: Look closely (3 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students point to two visible clues and record one question. Model the difference once: I see a walkway; I infer people could move along it. A modern photograph cannot establish ancient staffing numbers or military success.
Ask	What do you see? What can you reasonably infer? What remains a question?
Expected response	Visible clues may include towers, a walkway, battlements, high ground, or a gate. Good questions ask about people, supplies, visibility, repairs, or movement.
Transition	Locate the three sites used in the lesson.

Source: Jakub Halun, Great Wall near Jinshanling, 29 May 2009, CC BY-SA 3.0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:20090529_Great_Wall_8185.jpg . Cropped and resized.

Slides 3-4

Slide 3: Three selected sites (5 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Point first to East Asia, then to northern China. Students circle the western site and identify the two sites near Beijing. Explain that markers show selected places, not one continuous wall line.
Ask	Which site is farthest west? Which two are near Beijing?
Expected response	Yumen Pass area is farthest west. Badaling and Jinshanling are near Beijing.
Transition	Connect each site to a selected historical period.

Source: Natural Earth, 1:110m land polygons, public domain. <https://www.naturalearthdata.com/downloads/110m-physical-vectors/110m-land/> . Modern coastline for orientation only.

Slide 4: Periods and remains (3 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students number the dynasties from earliest to latest. Keep the distinction between earlier Qin defenses, Han remains in the west, and later Ming-period sites near Beijing. Mention the Xin interruption only if asked.
Ask	Which comes first? Does a Ming wall photograph show the wall as it looked under Qin Shi Huang?
Expected response	Qin, Han, Ming. No; the surviving Beijing-area masonry shown here is associated with the Ming period and has modern repairs.
Transition	Compare two environments and materials without using material as a universal date test.

Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, The Great Wall. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/438/> . Used for the long history and surviving sites; the old Moon claim is not used.

Slides 5-6

Slide 5: Environment and remains (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students write one similarity or difference in terrain or visible material. State that material is useful evidence, but material alone is not a universal dating test.
Ask	What differs? What cannot the photographs prove by themselves?
Expected response	Yumen appears drier and shows layered earth; Badaling is mountainous and shows masonry. Neither image alone proves an exact date, original appearance, staffing, or effectiveness.
Transition	Look more closely at one Ming-period wall.

Source: Robysan, Great Wall at Badaling, 5 August 2006, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greatwall_badaling.jpg . Cropped and resized; modern repairs affect what is visible.

Slide 6: Observe wall features (4 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students locate the numbered features and try the word bank on their handout. Do not reveal the labels until students have pointed.
Ask	Which feature could help people watch, move, or find some cover?
Expected response	Students may identify the tower, battlements, and walkway or describe each accurately before naming it.
Transition	Reveal the labels and test one function.

Source: Robysan, Great Wall at Badaling, 5 August 2006, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greatwall_badaling.jpg . Cropped and resized; modern repairs affect what is visible.

Slides 7-8

Slide 7: Wall features (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Confirm the labels. Ask partners to use the sentence frame and distinguish observation from inference. Battlements have raised sections and gaps along the top edge. A tower is a structure; a beacon is a warning signal.
Ask	Which visible detail supports your explanation?
Expected response	Tower: raised observation position. Battlements: some cover while looking or defending through gaps. Walkway: movement along the wall.
Transition	Test what a warning needs to travel.

Source: Robysan, Great Wall at Badaling, 5 August 2006, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greatwall_badaling.jpg . Cropped and resized; modern repairs affect what is visible.

Slide 8: Clear-air relay (1 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students draw A to B to C. Stress that the image shows one moment: B must notice A and send a new signal for C. Do not give a fixed speed or universal smoke code.
Ask	What must happen at B?
Expected response	A staffed post at B must see A and relay a new visible warning to C.
Transition	Change one condition: add fog.

Source: Badaling Special Zone Office, Periodic Report (2002), UNESCO-hosted. <https://whc.unesco.org/document/162535> . Used for the Badaling site, structures, signaling and restoration.

Slides 9-10

Slide 9: Fog and visibility (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students put an X between B and C and revise their explanation. More towers alone do not remove fog or the need for people. Accept discussion of another messenger or signal only as a possible response, not as proof of a standard system.
Ask	Which link is blocked? What condition does this show?
Expected response	B to C is obscured. A wall and towers help only when staffed posts can detect and relay a warning under the actual conditions.
Transition	Move from visibility to another need: supplies.

Source: Badaling Special Zone Office, Periodic Report (2002), UNESCO-hosted. <https://whc.unesco.org/document/162535> . Used for the Badaling site, structures, signaling and restoration.

Slide 10: Grain, transport and guards (3 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.3

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students trace grain to transport to guards and identify a weak link. The scene is explanatory, not a primary source or precise reconstruction. Existing stores may last for a while; road damage does not mean immediate starvation.
Ask	Why might guards receive less food even when grain exists?
Expected response	A damaged or blocked road can delay carriers or pack animals. Too few carriers is another supported answer.
Transition	Consider another use of a border pass: controlled movement and exchange.

Source: David M. Robinson, Why Military Institutions Matter for Ming History, Journal of Chinese History 1 (2017), 297-327. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jch.2016.36> . Used for the production, delivery, storage and distribution of supplies and for garrison markets.

Slides 11-12

Slide 11: Movement at a pass (2 min)

Student material: Group Evidence p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students identify the people, gate and guard check. Explain that passes could connect defense, inspection, movement and exchange. Do not describe neighboring peoples as one permanent enemy or claim trade guaranteed peace.
Ask	What can a gate do besides block movement?
Expected response	It can channel movement, allow checks, organize lines, and support regulated exchange.
Transition	Read two short research notes for evidence.

Source: Sechin Jagchid and Van Jay Symons, Peace, War, and Trade Along the Great Wall, Indiana University Press.
<https://iupress.org/9780253331878/peace-war-and-trade-along-the-great-wall/> . Used for border exchange; trade did not guarantee peace.

Slide 12: Research notes (3 min)

Student material: Group Evidence p.1

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Read the two notes aloud or let groups take one each. Students underline a detail and connect it to the pictured relationship. The claims come from scholarship, not from the teaching illustrations.
Ask	Which words support a claim about supplies? Which support a claim about a pass?
Expected response	Produced, delivered, stored and distributed support the supply chain. Supervise markets and movement supports inspection and exchange.
Transition	Apply the evidence to a fictional border post.

Source: David M. Robinson, Why Military Institutions Matter for Ming History, Journal of Chinese History 1 (2017), 297-327.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/jch.2016.36> . Used for the production, delivery, storage and distribution of supplies and for garrison markets.

Slides 13-14

Slide 13: A fictional border post (2 min)

Student material: Group Plan p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Clarify the baseline before students choose: guards and basic food already exist. Students name the four problems at A-D. The fictional scene applies lesson relationships; it is not a real restored sector.
Ask	What problem does each letter mark? What already exists?
Expected response	A cracked wall; B a tower with no guard on duty; C a damaged supply road; D long lines at the gate. Walls, towers, guards and basic food already exist.
Transition	Compare four improvements.

Source: Four decision illustrations and the supply scene are teaching illustrations. They do not document an exact event, uniform, building or road.

Slide 14: Four improvements (2 min)

Student material: Group Plan p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Read each action and its direct effect. Do not reveal remaining-risk examples yet. Students should use lesson details rather than treating an option illustration as historical proof.
Ask	Which problem does each action address most directly?
Expected response	A cracked wall; B an unstaffed watch; C a damaged supply road; D long lines and checks at the crossing.
Transition	Groups choose two different actions and defend them.

Source: Four decision illustrations and the supply scene are teaching illustrations. They do not document an exact event, uniform, building or road.

Slides 15-16

Slide 15: Group decision (5 min)

Student material: Group Plan p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Give each group of three or four one group pack. Students choose two distinct actions, cite two specific details, and name one remaining risk. Accept all six pairs when reasoning is specific.
Ask	Why these two? What still worries you?
Expected response	Answers vary. Look for a clear pair, two relevant details, and an honest remaining risk. Do not score the pair itself.
Transition	Prepare a concise group report.

Source: Badaling Special Zone Office, Periodic Report (2002), UNESCO-hosted. <https://whc.unesco.org/document/162535> . Used for the Badaling site, structures, signaling and restoration.

Slide 16: Group reports (3 min)

Student material: Group Plan p.2

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Hear two 30-second reports and compare reasoning. Invite listeners to name a different problem the second plan addresses. Reveal risk examples only after students have proposed their own.
Ask	What did the two plans value differently?
Expected response	One plan may prioritize repair and supply; another may prioritize watching and movement. Difference is acceptable when evidence and limits are clear.
Transition	Return to the essential question as an individual.

Source: Four decision illustrations and the supply scene are teaching illustrations. They do not document an exact event, uniform, building or road.

Slides 17-18

Slide 17: Return to the essential question (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.4

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students rehearse an individual claim aloud. Do not require one yes or no. A conditional claim is historically stronger when it explains help and limits.
Ask	What could a wall help people do? What else did it need?
Expected response	It could support watching, movement, defense of a crossing and warning, but needed people, visibility, repair, supplies and decisions.
Transition	Write an independent four- or five-sentence response.

Source: Jakub Halun, Great Wall near Jinshanling, 29 May 2009, CC BY-SA 3.0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:20090529_Great_Wall_8185.jpg . Cropped and resized.

Slide 18: Independent response (7 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.4

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Every student writes independently. Score judgment, two specific details, explanation, and a limit. Language support students may use sentence frames, short sentences, or an oral response while preserving their own judgment.
Ask	Which two details best support your answer?
Expected response	Responses should make a claim, use two accurate lesson details, explain their relevance, and identify a real limit.
Transition	Share one sentence, then revise for precision.

Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, The Great Wall. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/438/> . Used for the long history and surviving sites; the old Moon claim is not used.

Slides 19-20

Slide 19: Revise the response (2 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.4

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students read one sentence to a partner and make one revision. The checklist is a scoring guide, not a required conclusion.
Ask	Which sentence became more specific?
Expected response	A revision may name the exact feature, condition, supply link, or remaining risk rather than saying only the wall helped.
Transition	Complete the exit check independently.

Source: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, The Great Wall. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/438/> . Used for the long history and surviving sites; the old Moon claim is not used.

Slide 20: Exit check (5 min)

Student material: Handout 60 p.4

Teacher move	Guide
Teach	Students complete the exit check independently. Collect it separately from the group plan.
Ask	What feature and function did you choose? What is the dynasty order? What limit did you name?
Expected response	Accept tower, battlements, or walkway with a reasoned function. Order: Qin, Han, Ming. Limits may include staffing, visibility, repair, supplies, decisions, or threats beyond the wall.
Transition	End the lesson and use the separate five-question quiz only on another occasion or as an optional check.

Source: Robysan, Great Wall at Badaling, 5 August 2006, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greatwall_badaling.jpg . Cropped and resized; modern repairs affect what is visible.

Student Handout Answers

Map and time

- Underline Badaling and Jinshanling, near Beijing. Circle Yumen Pass area, the westernmost of the three selected sites. Han wall remains near Dunhuang belong to this regional location, not a fourth plotted point.
- Order: 1 Qin (221-206 BCE), 2 Han (206 BCE-220 CE), 3 Ming (1368-1644 CE). Circle Ming for much of the visible brick-and-stone wall near Beijing.

Structure matches

- Watchtower -> help guards see and send signals from a high point.
- Battlements -> protect a person looking or shooting through the wall.
- Walkway -> help people move along the wall.
- Gate or pass -> control movement through the barrier.

Signals and supplies

- Clear sight lets one tower notice a signal and repeat it. Fog blocks the line of sight, so the relay may stop or slow.
- Supply order: grain is loaded -> carriers and pack animals use the road -> food reaches the fort -> guards stay at their posts.

Accept another careful sequence if the student explains it. Do not accept that a wall sends messages or feeds guards by itself.

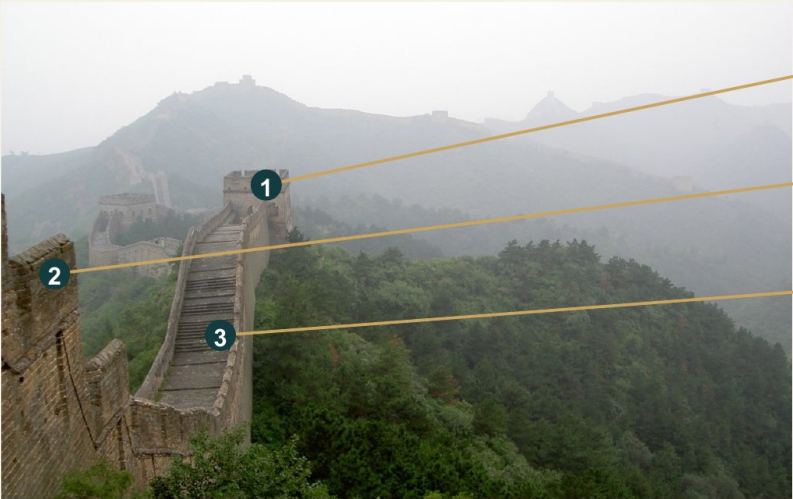
Map and Structure: Visual Answers



Circle Yumen Pass area. Underline Badaling and Jinshanling. Homework: sun at Yumen Pass area; triangles at the two sites near Beijing.

Tower, battlements and walkway

Use a visible detail to explain one possible function.



- 1 Tower
- 2 Battlements
- 3 Walkway

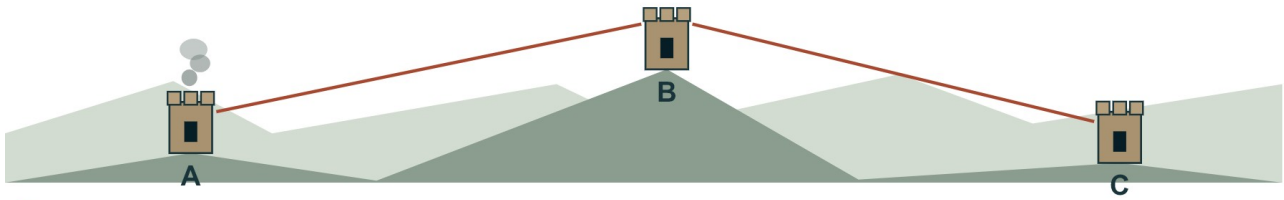
Battlements:
Raised sections and gaps
that give guards cover.
I see _____.
It could help people
_____.

Functions are reasoned from visible structures; the photograph is not a record of success. 07 China History Studio v2.3

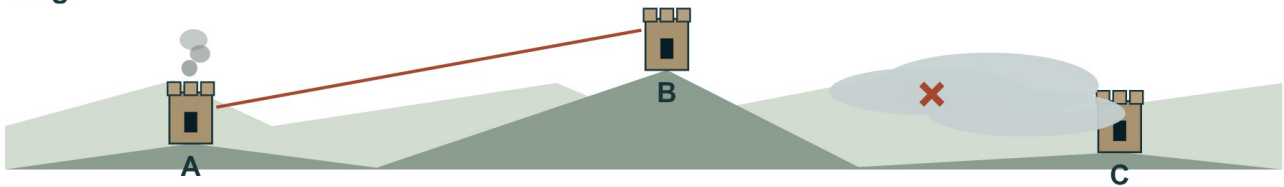
No.	Name	Possible function
1	Tower	A high place for watching and signaling.
2	Battlements	Cover and openings for guards.
3	Walkway	Movement along the wall.

Signaling: Visual Answer

Clear air



Fog



Clear: A to B to C. Fog: A to B; the B-to-C link may fail because C cannot see B's signal.

The diagram models a condition-dependent relay. It does not establish a fixed tower spacing, signal code, or travel speed. Guards must notice and repeat the warning.

Group Decision Answers

All six pairs can earn full credit when students use two specific details and identify a reasonable remaining risk. Do not reveal these examples before the group decision.

Pair	Possible reasoning	A risk that may remain
A + B	Close the weak wall and restore watching/signaling.	Supplies or crossing organization may still fail.
A + C	Close the weak wall and restore the food route.	An unwatched tower may miss danger.
A + D	Close the wall and manage movement at the pass.	The fort's road may still delay supplies.
B + C	Restore warning and help food reach the guards.	The damaged wall remains a weak point.
B + D	Watch for danger and check movement through the pass.	Road damage may delay supplies.
C + D	Support the fort and organize the crossing.	The damaged wall and unwatched tower remain.

Two complete sample responses

Sample A + C

We chose A and C. Repairing the damaged wall closes a visible weak section. Fixing the road helps carriers and pack animals bring food and equipment to the fort. The tower is still unwatched, so a warning could be missed.

Sample B + D

We chose B and D. Guards on watch can spot danger and repeat a signal. Organizing the crossing helps officials check people and goods. The damaged road could still delay supplies.

Independent Response and Exit Check

Sample individual answer

A wall could help protect an empire, but only as part of a larger system. Towers could help guards watch and pass warnings when they could see one another. Roads and stored grain helped people remain at border forts. Gates could also control movement through important routes. However, fog, damaged roads, missing guards, or weak sections could limit the system.

Four-point scoring guide

Point	Look for
1	A clear judgment that answers the essential question.
1	Two specific details from the slides or handouts.
1	Explanation of how each detail supports the judgment.
1	One reasonable limit or condition.

Spelling, a specific option pair, or memorizing the sample answer is not required for full credit.

Exit check

1. Accept a visible tower for watching/signaling, battlements for cover, or walkway for movement, with a plausible function.
2. Qin, Han, Ming.
3. Accept people/guards, clear sight, maintained towers and walls, roads, supplies, administration, or another supported condition.

Quiz and Homework Answers

Short quiz

1. B: Qin, Han, Ming.
2. Feature 1, the tower. Its raised position provides a place to watch and send signals. Accept another visible clue linked to that function.
3. Fog can block the line of sight, so one tower may not see and repeat another tower's signal.
4. A damaged road may slow carriers and pack animals and delay grain or equipment, making it harder for guards to remain at the fort.
5. Accept a supported benefit and limit. Example: towers can help warn people; however, the system needs guards, supplies, maintenance, and workable conditions.

Homework

Map: triangles beside Badaling and Jinshanling; sun beside Yumen Pass area. These match the mountain and desert-edge settings compared in class.

Sample response (50-80 words)

Badaling and Jinshanling are near Beijing in mountain areas, while Yumen Pass area is far to the northwest near the desert edge. High ground could help watchers see, but guards still needed food and equipment. Roads connected supplies to forts, and passes helped manage movement. However, fog, damaged roads, missing guards, or broken sections could make the whole defense system less effective.

Differentiation and Discussion

Language support

- Use the language-support handout as a replacement, keeping the same images, options, essential question, and evidence expectations.
- Allow students to rehearse with a partner, point to visuals, or give an oral response before writing.
- Accept short complete ideas. Ask one follow-up: What detail makes you think that?

Extension

- Ask students to rank a third improvement and explain when it would become urgent.
- Ask students to compare what a photograph can show with what a written record can show.

Discussion checks

- Students connect a choice to a marked problem or research detail.
- Students treat people and supplies as part of the system.
- Students identify a condition or remaining risk without claiming one perfect answer.

Source pointer

See Sources_and_Visual_Credits_v2.3.pdf for URLs, image credits, and the factual scope of each reference.