

CHINA

China Quick Facts

Official Name: People's Republic of China

Total area: 9,596,960 sq km

Population: 1,373,541,278
(July 2016 est.)

GDP: \$21.27 trillion (2016 est.)

Government: communist state

Capital: Beijing

Motto: No official motto

For thousands of years, China has had a thriving civilization. The inventive Chinese were the first to develop paper, printing, gunpowder, silk, the magnetic compass, and many other products and processes. A series of leaders founded dynasties that ruled China, starting in 2070 B.C. The country was first united under an emperor in 221 B.C. This was called the Qin or Ch'in Dynasty. The Qing Dynasty was the last imperial dynasty in China. A revolution resulted in a republic being established in 1912. After a civil war between communists and Chinese nationalists, the communists took over the government in 1949. The nationalists fled to the island of Taiwan and set up the Republic of

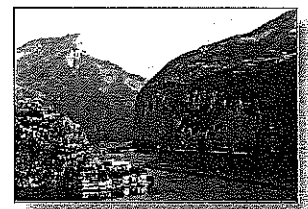
China. However, the government in mainland China does not recognize the Republic of China. They claim Taiwan as one of the provinces of the People's Republic of China. Since 1971, the United Nations has recognized only the People's Republic of China.

Today the head of state is the president, who is indirectly elected by the National People's Congress. The head of government is the premier, who is nominated by the president and approved by the Congress. The National People's Congress is the legislative branch of the Chinese government. The members are indirectly elected by regional, provincial, and municipal people's congresses and by the army. Only members of the Chinese Communist Party and other approved candidates can be elected. The highest court is the Supreme People's Court.

China has a wide variety of geographic features. The west has mountain ranges, plateaus, and deserts. In the east, there are hills, plains, and river deltas. The climate ranges from tropical in the south to subarctic in the north. The Himalaya Mountains along China's border with Nepal are the highest mountains in the world. China's, and the world's, highest peak is Mt. Everest at 8,850 m (29,025 ft.). The Taklamakan Desert is the largest desert in China. It is called the "sea of death." The Gobi Desert begins east of the Taklamakan and continues along the border with Mongolia.

The rivers in China have been important for agriculture, transportation, and in modern times, the generation of hydroelectric power. The Yangtze River is the third longest river in the world. It flows from west to east across the country and empties into the East China Sea near Shanghai. The Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River is the world's largest hydroelectric dam. In addition to generating electricity, it is designed to control flooding downstream and improve shipping on the river. However, the reservoir created by the dam is 660 km (410 mi.) long. This displaced 1.24 million people, covered important archaeological sites, and has changed the environment in the area greatly. The Yellow River, or Huang He River, flows into the Bohai Sea. It is considered the "cradle of Chinese civilization" since this was where people first settled, built small villages, grew crops, and began the Chinese culture.

The wildlife in China is varied. Snow leopards, river dolphins, and giant pandas are some of the rarest animals found in China. While increasing development for agriculture, industry, and the growing population continues to destroy wildlife habitat, China has set aside more than 2,500 nature reserves.



Qutang Gorge on the Yangtze River

Name: _____ Date: _____

CHINA WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

Directions: Use the clues below to determine the words associated with China that are in the puzzle. Write the words on the lines provided and find and circle them in the word search puzzle.



- The Chinese were the first to invent the magnetic _____.
- The Qin _____ was the first to be led by an emperor.
- A _____ brought an end to the last imperial dynasty in China.
- China became a _____ in 1912.
- The _____ took over China's government in 1949.
- Chinese nationalists set up their own government on the island of _____.
- The capital of the People's Republic of China is _____.
- The legislature is the National People's _____.
- The highest mountains in the world are the _____ Mountains.
- The _____ Desert is called the "sea of death."
- The Gobi Desert is along China's border with _____.
- The Three Gorges Dam is on the _____ River.
- The _____ River is called the "cradle of Chinese civilization."
- The reservoir created by the Three Gorges Dam covered up important _____ sites.
- River _____ are some of the rarest animals found in China.

