

# Settling Along the Huang River

Ch. 8/Sec. 1



# Geography

- China about the same size as the United States
- Covered by mountains and deserts
- 2 Main Rivers: Huang & Chang
  - Chang is China's longest river
  - Provided water for farming
  - Transportation for goods



# Importance of the Huang



- Chinese civilization grew along the Huang River (hwong)
  - Also called the Yellow River
  - Settled here around 5000 BC
  - Powerful rulers united villages and created Kingdoms

# Loess

- Gobi Desert
  - Winds blow loess (LOH es) to the Huang River Valley
  - Loess= fine, dustlike soil
    - Makes the Huang River muddy
    - Huang means yellow
  - When the river overflows its banks, loess covers the North China Plain
    - Makes the soil fertile



# Isolation

- China is surrounded by physical barriers
- 2 great deserts (north and west of China)
  - The Taklimakan
  - Gobi
- Himalayas form a wall between China and India
  - South more mountains
- Pacific Ocean to the east
- These barriers made trade and travel difficult
  - Led them to develop their own traditions and way of life



# Shang Dynasty

- A ruler from an early village rose up and founded the Shang Dynasty
  - Lasted for 600 years
- Dynasty= ruling family that holds power for many years
- Shang Government
  - Kept power within the family
  - Passed from brother to brother; youngest brother to oldest son



# Writing

- Oracle Bones
  - Earliest written records
  - Animal or turtle shells carved with written characters
  - Used to tell the future for the Shang kings
  - Questions were written on the bone— heated until it cracked
  - King or priest would interpret the cracks to get an answer
- Recorded important events
- Pictographs
  - Pictures that represented words or ideas
  - Today, written Chinese has many thousands of characters

# Oracle Bones

