What's the Connection?
In Section 3, you read about the Mongol conquest. Eventually, the Chinese drove the Mongols out, and a new dynasty arose.

Focusing on the Main Ideas
- Ming rulers strengthened China's government and brought back peace and prosperity. (page 431)
- During the Ming dynasty, China sent a fleet to explore Asia and East Africa. (page 433)

Locating Places
Nanjing (NAHN•JIHNG)
Portugal (POHR•chih•guhl)

Meeting People
Zhu Yuanzhang (JOO YOO•AHN•JAHNG)
Yong Le (YUNG LEE)
Zheng He (JUNG HUH)

Building Your Vocabulary
- treason (TREE•zuhn)
- census (SEHN•suhs)
- novel (NAH•vuhl)
- barbarian (bahr•BEHR•ee•uhn)

Reading Strategy
Cause and Effect Use a chart like the one below to show cause-and-effect links in China's early trade voyages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zheng He traveled to parts of Asia and Africa.</td>
<td>1405 Zheng He begins first overseas voyage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1514 Portuguese ships arrive in China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1644 Ming dynasty falls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Rise of the Ming

Main Idea Ming rulers strengthened China’s government and brought back peace and prosperity.

Reading Focus Think about all the different things the government does for people. Imagine if you were running the government and had to rebuild the country after a war. What would you do? Read to learn how the Ming rulers in China rebuilt their country after the Mongols left.

Kublai Khan died in 1294. A series of weak rulers followed him, and Mongol power began to decline. During the 1300s, problems mounted for the Yuan dynasty. Mongol groups in Mongolia to the north broke away. At the same time, many Chinese resented Mongol controls and wanted their own dynasty.

How Did the Ming Dynasty Begin? A series of rebellions finally drove out the Mongols. In 1368 a rebel leader named Zhu Yuanzhang (JOO YOO•AHN•JAHNG) became emperor. Zhu reunited the country and set up his capital at Nanjing (NAHN•JIHNG) in southern China. There, he founded the Ming, or “Brilliant,” dynasty.

As emperor, Zhu took the name Hong Wu, or the “Military Emperor.” He brought back order, but he also proved to be a cruel leader. Hong Wu trusted no one and killed officials he suspected of treason (TREE•zuhn), or disloyalty to the government. Hong Wu ruled China for 30 years. When he died in 1398, his son became emperor and took the name of Yong Le (YUNG•LEE).
Yong Le worked hard to show that he was a powerful emperor. In 1421 he moved the capital north to Beijing. There, he built a large area of palaces and government buildings known as the Imperial City. The very center of the Imperial City was known as the Forbidden City. Only top officials could enter the Forbidden City because it was home to China’s emperors.

The Forbidden City had beautiful gardens and many palaces with thousands of rooms. The emperor and his court lived there in luxury for more than 500 years. The buildings of the Forbidden City still exist. You can visit them if you travel to China.

How Did the Ming Reform China? Ming emperors made all the decisions, but they still needed officials to carry out their orders. They restored the civil service examinations and made the tests even harder. From time to time, Ming officials carried out a census, or a count of the number of people. This helped them collect taxes more accurately.

With the strong government of the early Ming emperors providing peace and security, China’s economy began to grow. Hong Wu ordered many of the canals and farms destroyed by the Mongols to be rebuilt and ordered people to move to the new farms. He also ordered new forests to be planted and new roads to be paved.

Agriculture thrived as farmers worked on the new lands and grew more crops. Ming rulers repaired and expanded the Grand Canal so that rice and other goods could again be shipped from southern to northern China. They imported new types of rice from southeast Asia that grew faster. This helped feed the growing number of people living in cities. The Ming also supported the silk industry and encouraged farmers to start growing cotton and weaving cloth. For the first time, cotton became the cloth worn by most Chinese.

Chinese Culture Chinese culture also advanced under the Ming. As merchants and artisans grew wealthier, they wanted to learn more and be entertained. During the Ming period, Chinese writers produced many novels, or long fictional stories. The Chinese also enjoyed seeing dramas on stage. These works combined spoken words and songs with dances, costumes, and symbolic gestures.

What was the Forbidden City?
China Explores the World

**Main Idea** During the Ming dynasty, China sent a fleet to explore Asia and East Africa.

**Reading Focus** You probably have heard of Christopher Columbus and his trip to America. Imagine if China had sent ships to America first. Read to learn about Chinese explorations of Asia and East Africa.

Early Ming emperors were curious about the world outside of China. They also wanted to increase China’s influence abroad. To reach these goals, Ming emperors built a large fleet of ships. The new ships usually traveled along China’s coast. However, they could also sail in the open sea.

Who Was Zheng He? From 1405 to 1431, Emperor Yong Le sent the fleet on seven overseas voyages. The emperor wanted to trade with other kingdoms, show off China’s power, and demand that weaker kingdoms pay tribute to China.

The leader of these journeys was a Chinese Muslim and court official named Zheng He (JUNG HUH). Zheng He’s voyages were quite impressive. His first fleet had 62 large ships, 250 smaller ships, and almost 28,000 men. The largest ship was over 440 feet (134 m) long. That made it more than five times as long as the Santa María that Christopher Columbus sailed almost 90 years later!

Zheng He’s Voyages 1405–1433

Zheng He’s voyages took him to faraway lands from which he brought back many exotic items.

1. What cities in Africa did Zheng He visit?
2. About how far did Zheng He travel?

**Using Geography Skills**

**KEY**
- Exploration routes of Zheng He’s fleet

**Zheng He’s Voyages**
- China
- India
- Arabia
- Africa
- South China Sea
- Persian Gulf
- Arabian Sea
- Bay of Bengal
- Sri Lanka (Ceylon)
- Maldives
- Borneo
- Java
- Java
- Sumatra
- Melaka
- Chittagong
- Bengal
- Persia
- Gulf
- Red Sea
- Jeddah
- Makkah
- Aden
- Mogadishu
- Malindi
- Mombasa
- Quanzhou
- Nanjing
- Brussels
- China
- India
- Arabia
- Africa
- South China Sea
- Persian Gulf
- Arabian Sea
- Bay of Bengal
- Sri Lanka (Ceylon)
- Maldives
- Borneo
- Java
- Java
- Sumatra
- Melaka
- Chittagong
- Bengal
- Persia
- Gulf
- Red Sea
- Jeddah
- Makkah
- Aden
- Mogadishu
- Malindi
- Mombasa
- Quanzhou
- Nanjing
- Brussels

**CONTENTS**
The famous Chinese navigator Zheng He was born in Kunyang in southwest China in 1371. His birth name was Ma He, and he was from a poor Chinese Muslim family. Scholars say that his father and grandfather were honored hajjis—people who successfully made the pilgrimage to Makkah in Arabia. Little did Ma He know that his life would also involve travel. His seven missions across the oceans earned him heroic honors.

His father died when Ma He was little. As a child, Ma He was taken prisoner by the Chinese army. To overcome his sad life, Ma He turned to education. He learned different languages, including Arabic, and studied philosophy and geography. With his language skills and knowledge of the outside world, 10-year-old Ma He became a valuable imperial aide to Chinese officials.

By age 12, he was an assistant to a young prince named Zhu Di. Ma He accompanied the prince on several military missions. The prince, who later became the Emperor Yong Le, became a friend of Ma He. The emperor changed Ma He’s name to the honored surname Zheng. Soon after, Zheng He was assigned to lead a fleet of Chinese ships across the Indian Ocean, beginning the career that would make him famous. His voyages to new lands opened the door for trade among China, India, and Africa. Many of the Chinese moved abroad to sell Chinese goods. Those who learned and spoke more than one language, like Zheng He, prospered.

“We have set eyes on barbarian regions far away.”
—Zheng He, as quoted in Chinese Portraits

What “Made in China” products do you use on a daily basis? Do research to find out what percentage of goods imported to the United States are from China.
Where Did Zheng He Travel? Zheng He took his first fleet to southeast Asia. In later voyages, he reached India, sailed up the Persian Gulf to Arabia, and even landed in East Africa. In these areas, Zheng He traded Chinese goods, such as silk, paper, and porcelain. He brought back silver, spices, wood, and other goods. From Africa, Zheng He returned home with giraffes and other animals for the emperor’s zoo.

As a result of Zheng He’s voyages, Chinese merchants settled in Southeast Asia and India. There, they not only traded goods but also spread Chinese culture. Chinese merchants at home and abroad grew rich from the trade of the voyages and added to China’s wealth.

Despite these benefits, Chinese officials complained that the trips cost too much. They also said that trips were bad for China’s way of life because they brought in new ideas from the outside world and helped merchants become rich.

Confucius had taught that people should place loyalty to society ahead of their own desires. To the officials, China’s merchants were disobeying this teaching by working to gain money for themselves.

After Zheng He’s death, the Confucian officials persuaded the emperor to stop the voyages. The boats were dismantled, and no more ships capable of long distance ocean travel were allowed to be built. As a result, China’s trade with other countries sharply declined. Within 50 years, the ship-building technology was forgotten.

The Europeans Arrive in China Chinese officials were not able to cut off all of China’s contacts with the outside world. In 1514 a fleet from the European country of Portugal arrived off the coast of China. It was the first time Europeans had ever sailed to China and the first direct contact between China and Europe since the journeys of Marco Polo.

The Portuguese wanted China to trade with their country. They also wanted to convince the Chinese to become Christians. At the time, the Ming government was not impressed by the Portuguese. China was at the height of its power and did not feel threatened by outsiders. The Chinese thought the Europeans were barbarians, or uncivilized people.

At first, the Chinese refused to trade with the Portuguese, but by 1600, they had allowed Portugal to set up a trading post at the port of Macao in southern China. Goods were carried on European ships between Macao and Japan. Still, trade between China and Europe remained limited.

Despite restrictions, ideas from Europe did reach China. Christian missionaries traveled to China on European ships. Many of these missionaries were Jesuits, a special group of Roman Catholic priests. They
were highly educated, and their scientific knowledge impressed the Chinese. To get China to accept European ideas, the Jesuits brought with them clocks, eyeglasses, and scientific instruments. Although they tried, the Jesuits did not convince many Chinese to become Christians.

Why Did the Ming Dynasty Fall? After a long era of prosperity and growth, the Ming dynasty began to decline. Ming emperors had gathered too much power into their own hands. With the emperor having so much control, officials had little desire to make improvements. As time passed, Ming rulers themselves became weak. Greedy officials who lived in luxury took over the country. They placed heavy taxes on the peasants, who began to revolt.

As law and order disappeared, a people called the Manchus attacked China’s northern border. The Manchus lived to the northeast of the Great Wall in an area known today as Manchuria. The Manchus defeated Chinese armies and captured Beijing. In 1644 they set up a new dynasty.

What Did You Learn?

1. What was the purpose of the Forbidden City and where was it located?
2. How did the Chinese react to the arrival of Portuguese traders in 1514?
3. Organizing Information Draw a diagram like the one below. Fill in details about the achievements of the Ming dynasty.
4. Cause and Effect Why did Ming rulers repair and expand the Grand Canal?
5. Summarize Why did the Emperor Yong Le send Zheng He on his voyages? How did Zheng He’s voyages benefit China?
6. Persuasive Writing Imagine you are living in China at the time of Zheng He’s voyages. Write a newspaper editorial either for or against the voyages. Describe why you think the voyages are aiding or hurting the country as a whole.
7. Predict What do you think happened after China tried to limit trade?