

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Zheng He

**Aim:** How did Zheng He impact the Ming Dynasty?

**Do Now:** How did the Ming Dynasty impact China?

---

---

---

**Zheng He** (pronounced jung-huh): Zheng He was an important Chinese admiral that led several voyages during the Ming Dynasty. He traveled far distances and brought with him a huge fleet and large ships. His crew reached over 27,000 people and included sailors, soldiers, carpenters, interpreters, accountants, doctors, and religious leaders. As Zheng He traveled to new lands and interacted with new people he also distributed gifts, such as silver and silk, to show Chinese superiority.



1. Who was Zheng He? Why was he significant?

---

---

---

**Treatment of Conquered People:** As Zheng He met different groups of people many had different interpretations of how he treated them. Some people saw him as an *imperial aggressor*. An imperialist is someone who takes over a foreign country because they are more powerful. In addition, being aggressive is using that power to invade or use force against a group of people. However, other people had an opposing view of Zheng He. They saw him as a peaceful ambassador. An ambassador is a person who represents another country and visits a nation to learn from the people and exchange ideas and goods.

1. What is an imperial aggressor?

---

---

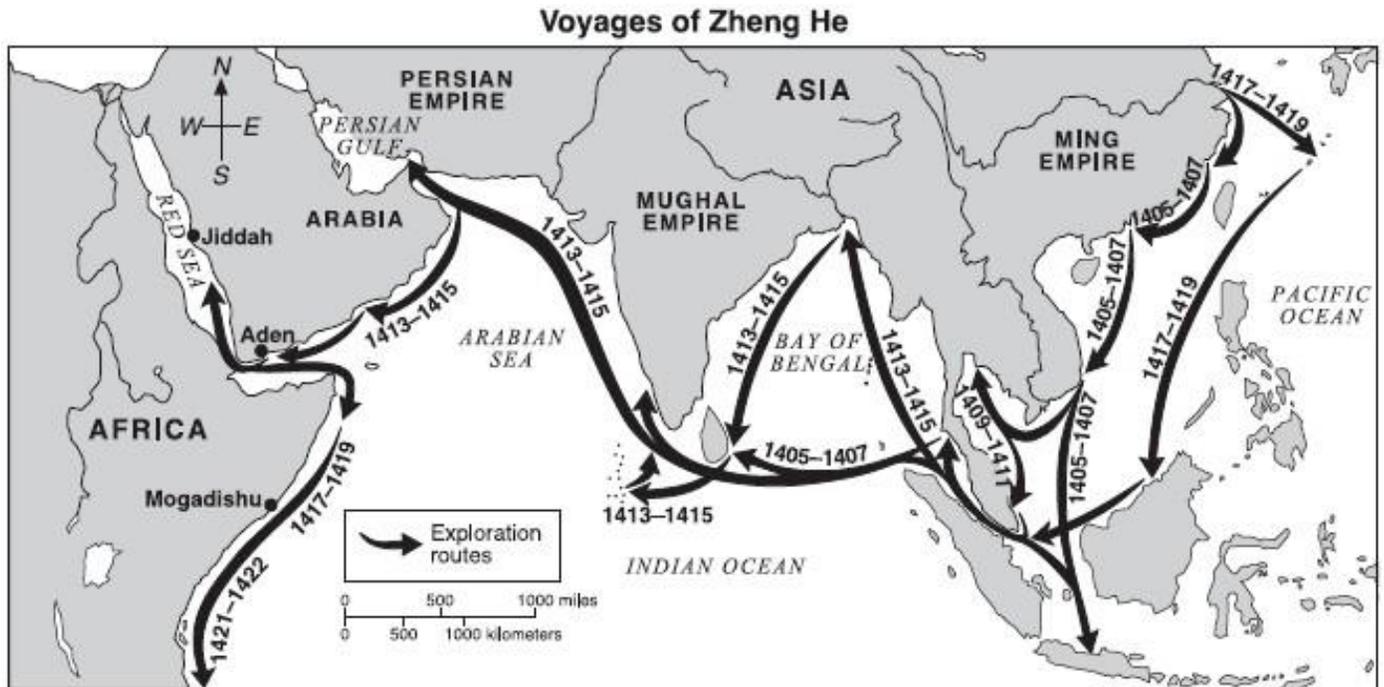
2. What is a peaceful ambassador?

---

---

**Instructions:** Read the documents that examine the impact Zheng He had on the people he interacted with during his travels. You must determine if Zheng He was an imperial aggressor or a peaceful ambassador.

**Document 1:** Map of Zheng He's voyages



Source: Elisabeth Ellis and Anthony Esler, *World History: Connections to Today*, Prentice Hall (adapted)

1. Where did Zheng He travel to during his expeditions?

---

---

---

**Document 2:** The Tributary System

During Ming times, the tributary system had been refined into a ritual, with clearly defined rights and duties on the part of each participant. China had the duty of keeping proper order in the East and Southeast Asian nations. China recognized the legitimacy of rulers who paid the tribute by sending envoys [*representatives*] to officiate [*carry out official duties*] when the leaders took office and by giving the leaders documents to confirm their authority. China went to their aid in times of foreign invasion, and sent relief missions and condolences in times of disaster. On their part, the tributary countries honored China as the superior country by sending periodic tribute, by requesting the approval of their kings, and by adopting the Chinese calendar.

1. What would China do for other nations in Asia?

---

---

---

2. What were other nations expected to do for China?

---

---

---

**Document 3:** Excerpt from a book written by Ma Huan, who traveled as an interpreter on three of Zheng He's expeditions.

In the late 1300s, men from China, including Chen Zu-yi, fled to Indonesia with their families. Chen Zu-yi set himself up as their leader. He was very wealthy and behaved like a tyrant. Whenever a ship belonging to strangers passed by, he robbed them of their valuables.

In 1407, the Chinese emperor sent Zheng He to the Indian Ocean. They stopped at Indonesia on their way. A man told Zheng He about the savage acts committed by Chen Zu-yi. Zheng He captured Chen Zu-yi and sent him back to the emperor in China, who had him executed.

1. How did Zheng He react to the tyrant, Chen Zu-Yi, in Indonesia?

---

---

---

**Document 4:** Excerpt from a book called *Ming History*, which was first published in 1793.

In 1409 Zheng He's fleet arrived in Sri Lanka [*country near India*]. The king invited Zheng He to his court and then demanded excessive gold coins. While Zheng He was at the king's court, the king sent soldiers to attack Zheng He's ships. Zheng He realized that with most of the king's army out of the capital, it was undefended. So Zheng He ordered 2,000 of his soldiers to make a surprise attack on the capital. They captured the king, his wife, and other officials. When the king's soldiers learned about the surprise attack and attempted to fight back, they were completely defeated by Zheng He's forces.

Zheng He took the king, his wife, and other captured officials back to China with him. He presented the captives to the Chinese emperor. The emperor pardoned the king and sent him and the captives back to Sri Lanka.

1. How did Zheng He react when the King of Sri Lanka demanded gold?

---

---

---

**Document 5:** Excerpt from an article first published in 2005 and written by the historian Geoff Wade who works at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore.

When Zheng He attacked the pirate Chen Zu-yi, he reported 5,000 people killed, ten ships burned, and seven ships captured. Zheng He appointed a new ruler for the area who served as an agent of the Chinese state. In Sri Lanka, Zheng He invaded the capital, captured the king, destroyed his military, and took the king and his family back to China. The Chinese appointed a puppet ruler to replace the king, presumably to act in ways beneficial to the Chinese.

These examples suggest that Zheng He's expeditions were intended to achieve the recognition of Ming dominance over all the states and kingdoms in the regions visited. To achieve this they used force, or the threat of force.

1. According to Geoff Wade, how did Zheng He treat Chen Zu-Yi in Indonesia?

---

---

---

2. According to Geoff Wade, how did Zheng He treat Sri Lanka?

---

---

---

3. Why did Zheng He lead his expeditions?

---

---

**Essential Question:** Do you think the people in Asia saw Zheng He as a peaceful ambassador or an imperial aggressor?

Peaceful Ambassador	Imperial Aggressor
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

**Accountable Talk:**

I agreed/disagreed (circle one) with \_\_\_\_\_ when they said

---

---

I agreed/disagreed (circle one) with \_\_\_\_\_ when they said

---

---

I agreed/disagreed (circle one) with \_\_\_\_\_ when they said

---

---