Objectives

- Describe how geography affected life on the Korean peninsula.
- Understand the influence of China and Buddhism on Korea.
- Explain the major achievements of the Choson dynasty.
Terms and People

- **Silla dynasty** – a Korean dynasty that lasted from 668 until 935; among the most advanced in the world

- **Koryo dynasty** – a dynasty in Korea that ruled from 918 until 1392; established a new capital at Songak

- **celadon** – porcelain with an unusual blue-green glaze

- **Choson (Yi) dynasty** – the ruling dynasty in Korea from 1392 to 1910.
Terms and People (continued)

- **King Sejong** – Korea’s most celebrated ruler; replaced the complex Chinese system of writing with a Korean phonetic alphabet
- **hangul** – the Korean phonetic alphabet
- **literacy rate** – the percentage of people who can read and write
How are Korea’s history and culture linked to those of China and Japan?

Despite the influence of China to the north, Korea maintained a separate, unique culture.

The Silla dynasty united the kingdoms in Korea. It was the first of three dynasties that shaped the country’s history.
Korea is located on a peninsula that juts out from Asia south of China.

- This unique location has played an important role in the culture’s development.

- China has had both cultural and political influence in Korea for a long time. During the Han dynasty, emperor Wudi set up a military colony in Korea.
Local rulers in Korea set up three kingdoms between 100 B.C. and A.D. 676.

- Koguryo was located in the north, Paekche in the southwest, and Silla in the southeast.
- Though they shared a common language, these kingdoms were often at war.
The Silla kingdom defeated Paekche and Koguryo in 676 with the help of the Chinese Tang emperor.

The **Silla dynasty** lasted until 935.

During this time, Korea flourished and its civilization was very advanced.
The Silla capital of Kyongju was an important center of culture during this time.

- Many temples were built as Buddhism became a powerful force.
- Korea traded with China and was influenced by its neighbor’s written language and culture.
- Kyongju was considered the “city of gold” due to its advances in many fields, including medicine, metal casting, and astronomy.
Conflict between peasants and aristocrats led to the overthrow of the Silla dynasty. It was replaced in 918 by the **Koryo dynasty**.

- A new capital city was built at Songak.
- **Both Confucianism and Buddhism** flourished during this dynasty.
- Korean inventors created **moveable metal type** for printing texts.
Another advance made by Koreans during the Koryo dynasty was perfecting the process for making celadon.

- Vases and jars made by Koreans were prized.
- The secret of making celadon was lost when the Mongols overran Korea.
Many years after the Mongols invaded Korea in 1231, the general Yi Song-gye overthrew them. He founded the Choson dynasty in 1392.

General Yi set up a government based on Confucian ideals. This was Korea’s longest-lived dynasty. It was also its last.
King Sejong, Korea’s honored ruler, replaced the Chinese system of writing in 1443.

He had his experts create **hangul**, the Korean phonetic alphabet.

Its use spread quickly and led to a high **literacy rate** in Korea.
Japan invaded China through Korea in the 1590s.

- They burned and looted the peninsula.
- To stop them, the Korean Admiral Yi Sun-shin used armored ships called “turtle ships” to sail into the Japanese fleet. Japan withdrew after six years.
Section Review

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Know It, Show It Quiz

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