

READING PASSAGE 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 1–13**, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

The Development of The Silk Industry

Silk, a natural fibre produced by a particular worm called a silkworm, has been used in clothing for many centuries.

When silk was first discovered in China over 4,500 years ago, it was reserved exclusively for the use of the emperor, his close relations and the very highest of his dignitaries. Within the palace, the emperor is believed to have worn a robe of white silk; outside, he, his principal wife, and the heir to the throne wore yellow, the colour of the earth.

Gradually silk came into more general use, and the various classes of Chinese society began wearing tunics of silk. As well as being used for clothing and decoration, silk was quite quickly put to industrial use, and rapidly became one of the principal elements of the Chinese economy. It was used in the production of musical instruments, as string for fishing, and even as the world's first luxury paper. Eventually even the common people were able to wear garments of silk.

During the Han dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), silk ceased to be a mere fabric and became a form of currency. Farmers paid their taxes in grain and silk, and silk was used to pay civil servants and to reward subjects for outstanding services. Values were calculated in lengths of silk as they had previously been calculated in weight of gold. Before long, silk became a currency used in trade with foreign countries, which continued into the Tang dynasty (616-907 AD). It is possible that this added importance was the result of a major increase in production. Silk also found its way so thoroughly into the Chinese language that 230 of the 5,000 most common characters of Mandarin have 'silk' as their key component.

Silk became a precious commodity, highly sought after by other countries from an early date, and it is believed that the silk trade actually existed before the Silk Road was officially opened in the second century BC. An Egyptian mummy with a silk thread in her hair, dating from 1070 BC, has been discovered in the village of Deir el Medina near the Valley of the Kings, and is probably the earliest evidence of the silk trade. During the second century BC, the Chinese emperor Han Wu Di's ambassadors travelled as far west as Persia and Mesopotamia, bearing gifts including silks. A range of important finds of Chinese silks have also been made along the Silk Road. One of the most dramatic of these finds was some Tang silk discovered in 1900. It is believed that around 1015 AD Buddhist monks, possibly alarmed by the threat of invasion by Tibetan people, had sealed more than ten thousand manuscripts and silk paintings, silk banners and textiles in caves near Dunhuang, a trading station on the Silk Road in north-west China.

Some historians believe the first Europeans to set eyes upon the fabulous fabric were the Roman legions of Marcus Licinius Crassus, Governor of Syria. According to certain accounts of the period, at an important battle near the Euphrates River in 53 BC, the Roman soldiers were so startled by the bright silken banners of the enemy that they fled in panic. Yet, within decades Chinese silks were widely worn by the rich and noble families of Rome. The Roman Emperor Heliogabalus (218-222 AD) wore nothing but silk. By 380 AD, the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus reported that the use of silk, which was once confined to the nobility, had now spread to all classes without distinction—even to the lowest. The desire for silk continued to increase over the centuries. Despite this demand, the price of silk remained very high.

In spite of their secrecy about production methods, the Chinese eventually lost their monopoly on silk production. Knowledge of silk production methods reached Korea around 200 BC, when waves of Chinese immigrants arrived there. Shortly after 300 AD, it travelled westward, and the cultivation of the silkworm was established in India.

Around 550 AD silk production reached the Middle East. Records indicate that two monks from Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul), capital of the Byzantine Empire, appeared at their emperor's court with silkworm eggs which they had obtained secretly, and hidden in their hollow bamboo walking sticks. Under their supervision the eggs hatched into worms, and the worms spun silk threads. Byzantium was in the silk business at last. The Byzantine church and state created imperial workshops, monopolising production and keeping the secret to themselves. This allowed a silk industry to be established, undercutting the market for ordinary-grade Chinese silk. However, high quality silk textiles, woven in China especially for the Middle Eastern market, continued to achieve high prices in the West, and trade along the Silk Road continued as before. By the sixth century the Persians, too, had mastered the art of silk weaving, developing their own rich patterns and techniques. But it wasn't until the 13th century that Italy began silk production, with the introduction of 2,000 skilled silk weavers from Constantinople. Eventually, silk production became widespread throughout Europe.

World silk production has approximately doubled during the last 30 years in spite of manmade fibres replacing certain uses of silk. Before this period, China and Japan were the two main producers, together manufacturing more than 50 per cent of world production each year. After the late 1970s, however, China dramatically increased its silk production, and once again became the world's leading producer.

Questions 1–7

Complete the notes below.

Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 1–7 on your answer sheet.

Chinese silk

Early uses

- Clothing
 - at first, silk only available to Chinese of high rank
 - emperor wore **1** _____ silk indoors
- In industry
 - silk items included parts of musical instruments, fishing string and **2** _____

Currency

- silk was used as payment of **3** _____ as well as for wages and rewards
- silk replaced **4** _____ as a unit of value
- silk soon used as payment in **5** _____ trade

Evidence of silk trade

- 1070 BC, Egypt:
 - hair of a **6** _____ contained silk
- 2nd century BC, Persia and Mesopotamia:
 - gifts of silk were presented by Chinese ambassadors
- 1015 AD, north-west China:
 - silk objects were hidden inside **7** _____

Questions 8–13

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 8–13 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE	<i>if the statement agrees with the information</i>
FALSE	<i>if the statement contradicts the information</i>
NOT GIVEN	<i>if there is no information on this</i>

- 8 Their first sight of silk created fear among Roman soldiers.
- 9 The quality of Chinese silk imported by the early Romans varied widely.
- 10 The Byzantine emperor first acquired silkworm eggs from the Chinese emperor.
- 11 The price of high-grade Chinese silk fell due to competition from Middle-Eastern producers.
- 12 Silk was produced in the Middle East several centuries before it was produced in Europe.
- 13 Global silk production has declined in recent years.

Questions 1–7 (ONE WORD ONLY)

题号	答案	精确定位句 (第 X 段)	详细解释
1	white	第1段: “the emperor is believed to have worn a robe of white silk;”	笔记中的提示是“emperor wore ____ silk indoors”。文中“within the palace (在宫内/室内) ... wore a robe of white silk”与“indoors”同义对应, 因此填 white 。
2	paper	第2段: “...as string for fishing, and even as the world's first luxury paper .”	笔记提示“musical instruments, fishing string and ____”。并列列举的第三个名词即 paper 。空格要求一词, 不能写“luxury paper”, 只填 paper 。
3	taxes	第3段: “Farmers paid their taxes in grain and silk...”	“silk was used as payment of ____ as well as for wages and rewards”对应“pay taxes (缴税)”。因此填复数 taxes 。
4	gold	第3段: “Values were calculated in lengths of silk as they had previously been calculated in weight of gold .”	“silk replaced ____ as a unit of value”= 丝绸取代了之前的“价值单位”。文中说先前按“ gold 的重量”计价, 被丝绸的长度所替代, 故填 gold 。
5	foreign	第3段: “silk became a currency used in trade with foreign countries...”	“used as payment in ____ trade”对应“与 foreign countries 的贸易”, 等同于“foreign trade (对外贸易)”。
6	mummy	第4段: “An Egyptian mummy with a silk thread in her hair, dating from 1070 BC...”	提示“hair of a ____ contained silk”。文中说明“木乃伊 (mummy) 的头发里有丝线”, 故填 mummy 。
7	caves	第4段: “...had sealed more than ten thousand manuscripts and silk... in caves near Dunhuang...”	提示“objects were hidden inside ____”。文中“sealed ... in caves (被封存/藏于洞窟中)”, 与“hidden inside”同义, 答案 caves 。

Questions 8–13 (T/F/NG)

题号	答案	精确定位句 (第 X 段)	详细解释
8	TRUE	第5段: “...at an important battle... the Roman soldiers were so startled by the bright silken banners... that they fled in panic .”	题干“first sight of silk created fear among Roman soldiers”。文中“startled (受惊) ... fled in panic (惊慌逃跑)”= 产生恐惧并逃离, 故 TRUE 。
9	NOT GIVEN	第5段整体	题干问“早期罗马人进口的中国丝绸质量差异很大”。文中只说丝绸很快被贵族乃至各阶层广泛穿用, 并未比较质量好坏差异, 也无“varied widely”的信息; 因此 NOT GIVEN 。
10	FALSE	第7段: “two monks ... appeared at their emperor’s court with silkworm eggs which they had obtained secretly, and hidden in their hollow bamboo walking sticks .”	题干称“拜占庭皇帝从中国皇帝那里得到蚕卵”。原文强调“僧侣秘密获取并偷运到君士坦丁堡”, 并非来自中国皇帝的正式获取, 故与题干矛盾, FALSE 。
11	FALSE	第7段: “However, high quality silk textiles ... continued to achieve high prices in the West ...”	题干称“高档中国丝绸因中东生产者的竞争而降价”。原文相反: 虽然拜占庭等地建立丝业、压低了普通中国丝, 但高质量中国丝在西方仍保持高价, 故 FALSE 。
12	TRUE	第7段: “Around 550 AD silk production reached the Middle East ... By the sixth century the Persians ...; It wasn’t until the 13th century that Italy began silk production...”	中东 (拜占庭/波斯) 在6世纪已会产丝; 欧洲 (意大利) 要到13世纪才开始, 时间差“several centuries”。与题干一致, TRUE 。
13	FALSE	第8段: “World silk production has approximately doubled during the last 30 years ...” ; “After the late 1970s, however, China dramatically increased its silk production ...”	题干称“全球丝绸产量下降”。原文明确“近30年翻倍”, 且中国在70年代末后“大幅增加”, 与题干相反, FALSE 。