



Section

1

China's Land and New Economy

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

China—the third-largest country in the world—has very diverse landforms. China's rapidly growing economy has changed in recent years.

Terms to Know

- dike
- fault
- communist state
- consumer goods

Reading Strategy

Create a diagram like this one. Then list two facts under each heading in the outer ovals.



Exploring our World

Giant pandas look cute and cuddly, but actually they are somewhat hot-tempered.

You would be hot-tempered as well, if your habitat were dwindling in size.

Fewer than 1,000 pandas live in the wild, and about 140 live in zoos.

The wild pandas make their home on the eastern edge of the Plateau of Tibet. They eat mainly bamboo stems and leaves.



China (officially called the People's Republic of China) lies in the central part of eastern Asia. It is the third-largest country in area, after Russia and Canada. China is just slightly larger than the United States.

China's Landscape

The map on the next page shows the many landforms that are within China's vast area. Rugged mountains cover about one-third of the country. Find the **Himalaya**, **Kunlun Shan**, **Tian Shan**, and **Altay Mountains** on the map.

Also located in China is the world's largest plateau. This high, flat land, commonly called the "Roof of the World," is really the **Plateau of Tibet**. Its height averages about 14,800 feet (4,500 m) above sea level. Scattered shrubs and grasses cover the plateau's harsh landscape. Pandas, golden monkeys, and other rare animals roam the thick forests found at the eastern end of this plateau.

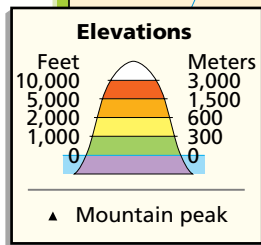
In addition to very high elevations, western China has some extremely low areas. The Turpan Depression, east of the Tian Shan, lies about 505 feet (154 m) *below* sea level. It is partly filled with salt lakes. It also is the hottest area of China. Daytime temperatures can reach as high as 122°F (50°C).

In northwestern China, mountain ranges circle desert areas. One of these areas is the **Taklimakan Desert**—an isolated region with very high temperatures. Sandstorms here can last for days and create huge, drifting sand dunes. Farther east lies another desert, the **Gobi**. About twice the size of Texas, the Gobi has rocks and stones instead of sand.

The map below shows that eastern China has plains along the Yellow, East China, and South China Seas. About 90 percent of China's people live on these fertile plains. Rich in minerals, eastern China is the site of the largest urban manufacturing areas, including **Beijing** and **Shanghai**. In hilly areas, farmers grow crops on terraced fields. Northern China holds many natural resources as well. China is a world leader in mining coal and iron ore. Tourists visit southeastern China to see its scenic waterfalls and steep gorges.



China and Its Neighbors: Physical/Political



Applying Map Skills

1. What rivers begin in the high elevations of southwest China?
2. What seas border China?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps



Web Activity Visit *The World and Its People* Web site at twip.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 17—Student Web Activities** to learn more about China's rivers.

Rivers Three of China's major waterways—the **Yangtze** (YANG•SEE), **Yellow**, and **Xi** (SHEE) **Rivers**—flow through the plains and southern highlands. They serve as important transportation routes and also as a source of soil. How? For centuries, these rivers have flooded their banks in the spring. The floodwaters have deposited rich soil to form flat river basins that can be farmed. China's most productive farmland is found in valleys formed by these major rivers.

Despite their benefits, the rivers of China have also brought much suffering. The Chinese call the Yellow River "China's sorrow." In the past, its flooding cost hundreds of thousands of lives and caused much damage. Floods in July and August 1998 killed at least 3,000 and caused an estimated \$20 billion in damage. To help control floods, the Chinese have built dams and **dikes**, or high banks of soil, along the rivers. Turn to page 499 to learn more about the Three Gorges Dam, a project that is underway on the Yangtze River.

An Unsteady Land In addition to floods, people in eastern China face another danger—earthquakes. Their part of the country stretches along the Ring of Fire, a name that describes Pacific coastal areas with volcanoes and frequent earthquakes. Eastern China lies along a **fault**, or crack in the earth's crust. As a result, earthquakes in this region are common—and can be very violent. Because so many people live in eastern China, these earthquakes can be disastrous.

Reading Check What problem does China have with its large rivers?



Leading Rice-Producing Countries



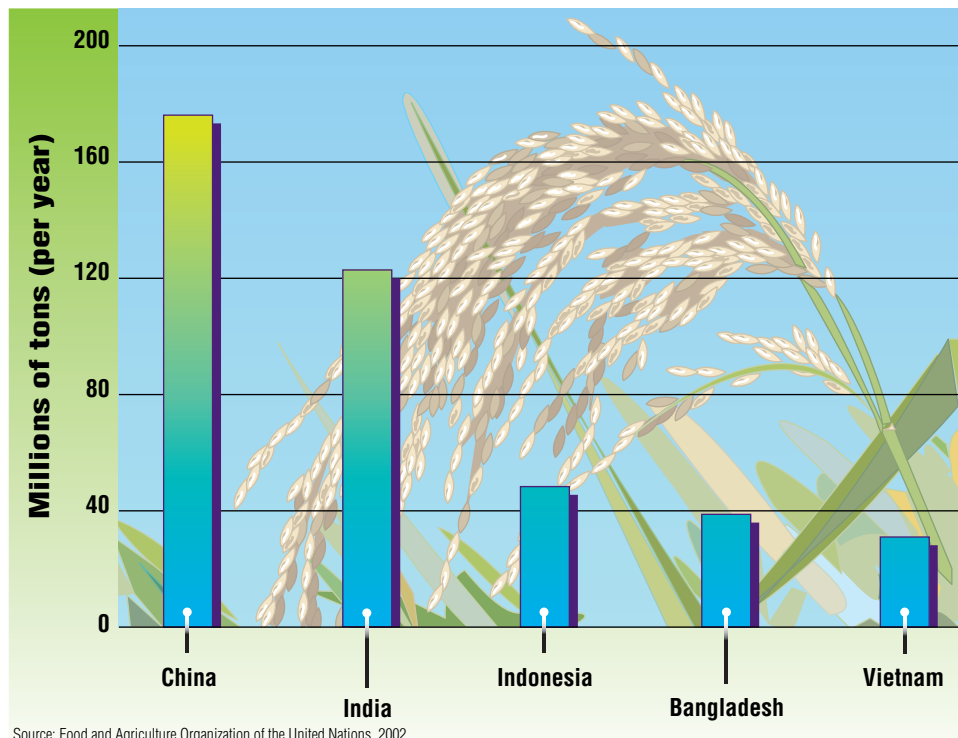
Analyzing the Graph

The most important food crop in Asia is rice.

Economics How many millions of tons of rice does China produce in a year?



Visit twip.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 17—Textbook Updates**.



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2002.

A New Economy

Since 1949, China has been a **communist state** in which the government has strong control over the economy and society as a whole. This means that government officials—not individuals or businesses—decide what crops to grow, what products to make, and what prices to charge. China discovered that the communist system created many problems. China fell behind other countries in technology, and manufactured goods were of poor quality.

In recent years, China's leaders have begun many changes to make the economy stronger. Without completely giving up communism, the government has allowed many features of a free enterprise system to take hold. Under this system, the government allows individuals to choose what jobs they want and where to start their own businesses. Workers can keep the profits they make. Farmers can grow and sell what they wish.

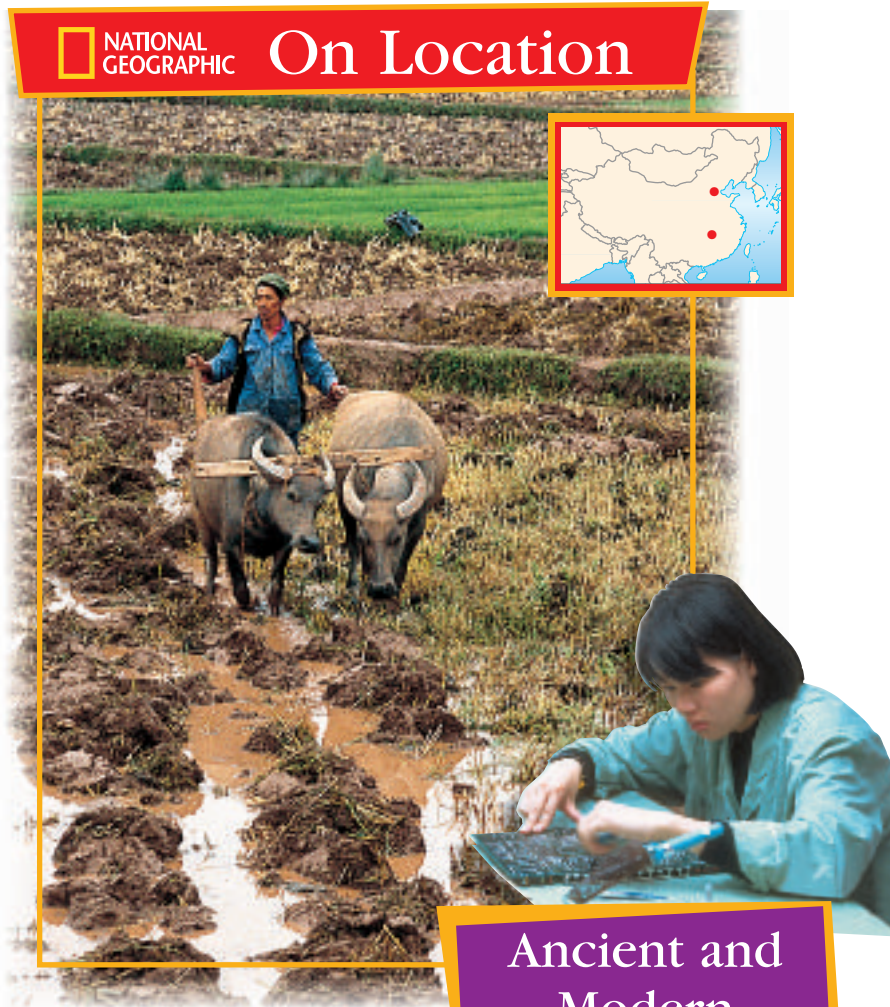
As a result of these and other changes, China's economy has boomed. Factories produce textiles, chemicals, electronic equipment, airplanes, ships, and machinery. Many of the items you own were probably made in China. Farm output has also risen rapidly. Because of mountains and deserts, only 10 percent of China's land is able to be farmed. Yet China is now a world leader in producing various agricultural products, including rice, tea, wheat, and potatoes.

Foreign Trade Eager to learn about new business methods, China has asked other countries to invest in, or put money into, Chinese businesses. Many companies in China are now jointly owned by Chinese and foreign businesspeople. Foreign companies expect two benefits from investing in China. First, they can pay Chinese workers less than they pay workers in their own countries. Second, companies in China have hundreds of millions of possible customers for their goods.

Results of Growth Because of economic growth, more of China's people are able to get jobs in manufacturing and service industries. Wages have increased, and more goods are available to buy. Some Chinese now enjoy a higher standard of living. They can afford **consumer goods**, or products people buy for themselves, such as

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

On Location



Ancient and Modern

In China's rural areas, ancient farming methods are still used (above left). However, in industrialized cities, high technology is being developed (above).

Government How has the government affected the economy in China?



Exploring Economics

Labor Costs

There's a good chance your clothes and shoes were manufactured in China. Some American companies can manufacture their products at much lower costs in China because the wages paid to workers there are low by U.S. standards. These companies pay more and offer better working conditions than Chinese employers. Still, some Americans are concerned about exploiting Chinese workers to make higher profits for U.S. companies.

televisions, cars, and motorcycles. Not everyone has adjusted well to the new economy, however. Many Chinese find that prices have risen faster than their incomes. Some Chinese have become very rich, while others remain poor.

China's economic growth has also harmed the environment. Many factories dump poisonous chemicals into rivers. Others burn coal, which gives off smoke that pollutes the air. This pollution leads to lung disease, which is the number one cause of death in China.

Hong Kong and Macau The cities of **Hong Kong** and **Macau** (muh•KOW) are an important part of the economic changes taking place in China. Both of these cities were once controlled by European countries—Hong Kong by the United Kingdom, and Macau by Portugal. China regained control of Hong Kong in 1997 and of Macau in 1999. Both are centers of manufacturing, trade, and finance. Chinese leaders hope that the successful businesses in these cities will help spur economic growth in the rest of the country.

At the same time, foreign companies that are considering investing in these cities must ask themselves whether China will stand by its “one country, two systems” pledge. The pledge refers to China's promise to allow Western freedoms and capitalism to exist side by side with Chinese communism. The **Time Reports: Focus on World Issues** on pages 505–511 takes a look at the economies and political freedoms of China and other countries in East Asia.

Reading Check To what does “one country, two systems” refer?

Section

1

Assessment

Defining Terms

1. **Define** dike, fault, communist state, consumer goods.

Recalling Facts

2. **Place** Name China's two large deserts.
3. **Region** What two very important functions do China's rivers perform?
4. **Economics** What has caused China's economy to boom?

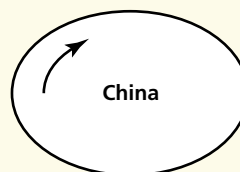
Critical Thinking

5. **Summarizing Information** How are China's rivers both a blessing and a disaster?
6. **Making Comparisons** How is a communist economic system different from a free enterprise system?

7. **Analyzing Information** What benefits does China receive from foreign investments?

Graphic Organizer

8. **Organizing Information** Create a diagram like this one. In the proper places on the oval, fill in the physical features you would encounter if you traveled completely around China.



Applying Social Studies Skills

9. **Analyzing Maps** Look at the map on page 495. What is the capital of China?

Making Connections

ART

SCIENCE

CULTURE

TECHNOLOGY

The Three Gorges Dam

Since 1919, Chinese officials have dreamed of building a dam across the Yangtze, the third-longest river in the world. Curving through the heart of China, the river provides an important highway for moving people and products from town to town. Yet the Yangtze is unpredictable. For thousands of years, floods have harmed the millions of people who live along its banks. Now construction is under way to build the dam.

The Dam

In 1994 the Chinese government began a 17-year-long project to build the Three Gorges Dam. It will eventually be 1.5 miles (2.4 km) wide and more than 600 feet (183 m) high. The dam is being built about halfway between the cities of Chongqing and Wuhan. (See the map on page 502.) The dam will benefit China in several ways. First, it will control water flow and stop floods. Second, its system of locks will allow large ships to travel inland. This will reduce trade and transportation costs for the millions of people who live inland. Third, the dam will create electricity using turbines, or water-driven engines.

Controversy

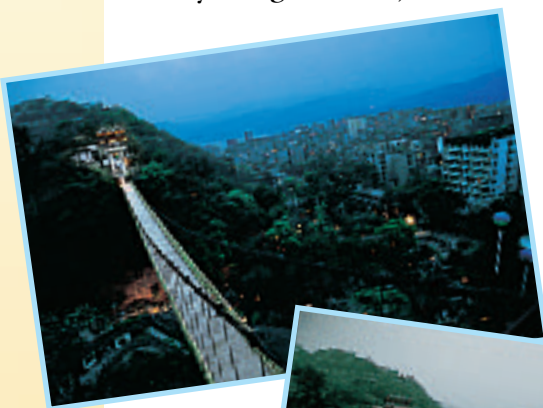
Even with all the proposed benefits, many people within China and elsewhere have questioned the wisdom of building the dam. When completed, the dam will create a deep reservoir nearly 400 miles (644 km) long. This reservoir will flood more than 100 towns and force nearly 1.2 million people to move. Many of these people must leave the farms that their families have worked for centuries. Historians point out that the reservoir will also wash away more than 1,000 important historical sites, including the homeland of the first people to settle the region about 4,000 years ago.

Environmentalists caution that the dam may create pollution and health risks. Industrial sites, once they lie underwater, may leak hazardous chemicals. Sewage from communities surrounding the dam could flow directly into the reservoir and into the Yangtze River. In the past, this problem was less serious because the fast-moving waters of the Yangtze carried waste quickly out to sea.

Making the Connection

1. How have the unpredictable waters of the Yangtze River affected the Chinese?
2. Create a physical map of China showing the major rivers. Mark where the Three Gorges Dam is being built.
3. **Interpreting Points of View** List three reasons in support of constructing the Three Gorges Dam and three reasons against it.

◀ This is the city of Fengdu today (top) and as it will look when the dam and reservoir are completed (bottom).



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