

GREAT EXPLORERS

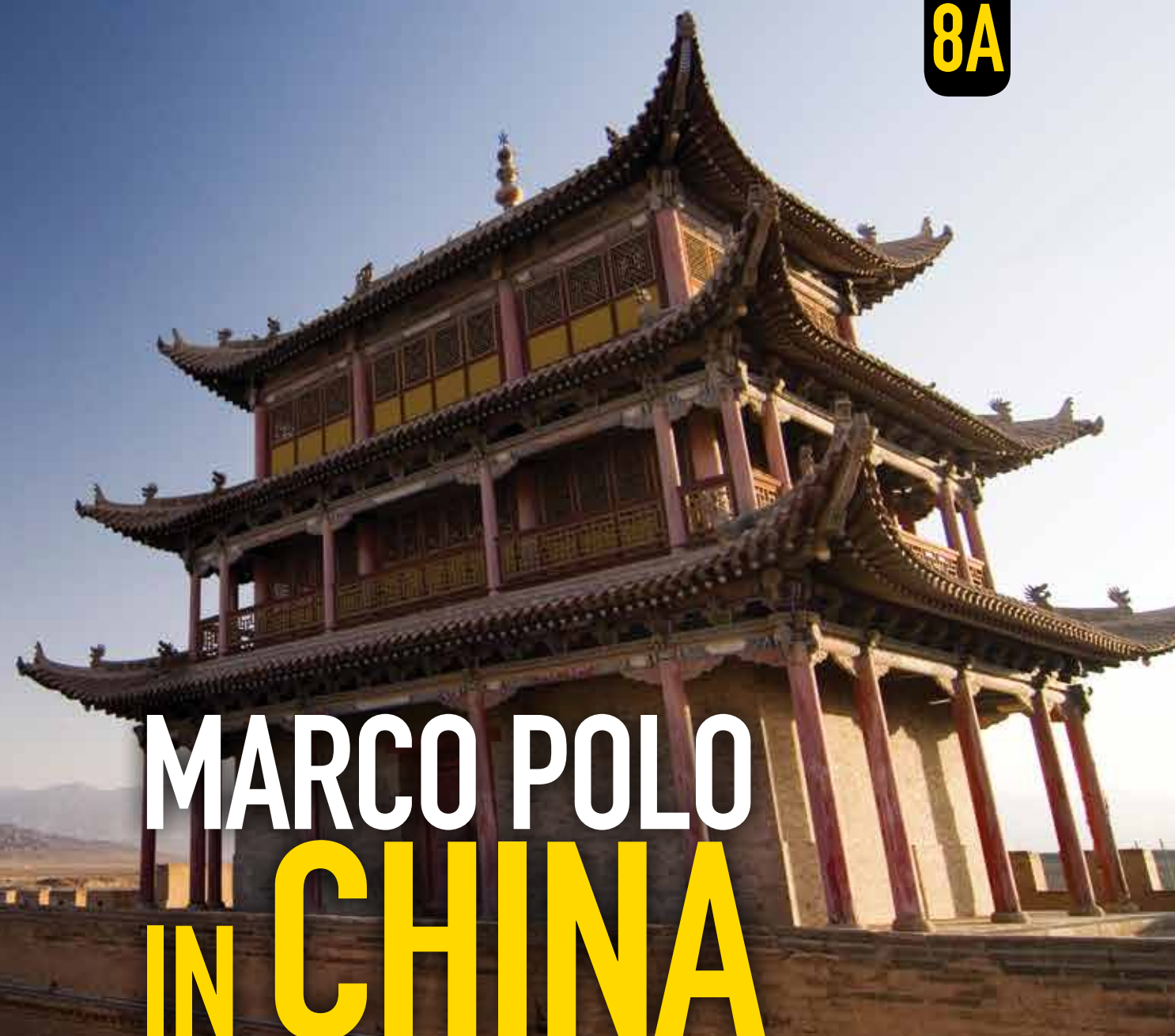
Many early explorers traveled the world by ship, spending months and even years at sea.

Warm Up

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Who are some great explorers from history? What are they well known for?
2. Which places remain to be explored today?
3. Would you like to be an explorer? Why or why not?

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MARCO POLO IN CHINA

Before You Read

↗ Route map of Marco Polo's journey

A. Reading Maps. Look at the map of the explorer Marco Polo's journey. Then answer the questions.

1. Where did Marco Polo start and finish his trip? For how many years did he travel?
2. What were some of the furthest places he reached during his travels?
3. What other places did he visit? What do you know about these places?

B. Predict. Why do you think Marco Polo went on such a long journey? Read the passage to check your ideas.

- 1 The Polos—Marco, his father Niccolò, and his uncle Maffeo—had been traveling for three and a half years when they finally achieved their **objective**—a long-awaited meeting with the powerful Mongol leader, Kublai Khan. The historic event took place in 1275 at the Khan's luxurious summer capital¹ in Shengdu, in what is now northern China. Kublai Khan was surprisingly **informal** as he greeted his tired guests: "Welcome, gentlemen! Please stand up. How've you been? How was the trip?"
- 10 Marco Polo's trip had, in fact, started more than 9,000 kilometers (5,600 miles) away in Venice when he was just

¹ The **capital** of a country is the city where its government meets.

↗ In Marco Polo's journal, he writes of the great cities of China, filled with grand buildings and palaces, like nothing he had ever seen before.

“Through [this great city] runs a large river . . . The number of boats on this river is so great that no one who should read or hear the tale would believe it . . . In fact, it is so big that it seems to be a sea rather than a river!”
–Marco Polo



a teenager. His father and uncle already knew Kublai Khan from a previous visit five years earlier, when they had spent a short time in Shengdu. On this second trip, the Polos stayed for 17 years before they returned home. They made themselves useful to the Khan and **undertook** various missions² and tasks for him. It is likely that the Khan considered it an honor³ that these Europeans—who were rare in China—had made this extremely difficult journey, and he took the opportunity to make good use of their skills and knowledge.

While he was in the service of Kublai Khan, “the most powerful man in people and in lands and in treasure that ever was in the world,” Marco Polo was able to learn and experience many things that were new to Europeans. In his travel **journal**, he wrote that Kublai Khan’s palace was the greatest he had ever seen. He **admired** the Khan’s recently completed new capital, Daidu, whose streets were “so straight and so broad.” The city was located in what is now the center of Beijing, and Kublai Khan’s city planning can still be **perceived** in the straight, broad streets of China’s modern capital.

² A **mission** is an important task, especially one that involves traveling.
³ Something that is an **honor** is special and desirable.

We learn from Marco Polo that, in the **administration** of his empire, Kublai Khan made use of a fast and simple message system. Horse riders spaced every 40 kilometers allowed messages to cover 500 kilometers a day. As soon as one horse had run 40 kilometers, the next horse would run the next 40 kilometers, and so on. Marco also learned the secret of asbestos cloth, which is made from a **mineral** and doesn’t catch fire. Paper money also took him by surprise, since it was not yet in use in the West at that time. Homes were heated with “black stones . . . which burn like logs.” Those stones were coal—unknown in most of Europe—and were so plentiful that many people had a hot bath three times a week.

Although the Khan did not want his visitors to leave, the Polos finally received permission to return home in 1292. Marco continued his observations while on the ocean **voyage** by way of Sumatra and India. After he returned home, Marco completed a book about his trip, full of details about his amazing cultural experiences. It was probably the single greatest **contribution** to geographical knowledge ever made to the West about the East.

▲ Marco Polo wrote that he saw 15,000 boats a day sailing on the nearby Yangtze River. The river is famous for its beauty, trade, and influence on art and culture. Today, the lights of boats shine on the Qinhuaihe, a branch of the Yangtze River flowing through the city of Nanjing.

Reading Comprehension

Multiple Choice. Choose the best answer for each question.

- Gist** 1. What is the passage mainly about?
- Marco Polo's relationship with Kublai Khan
 - why Marco Polo's travels are important
 - why Marco Polo decided to write a book
 - how Marco Polo was able to reach China
- Detail** 2. What was surprising about the Polos' meeting with the Khan?
- He could speak English.
 - He spoke to them informally.
 - He lived in a luxurious palace.
 - He didn't remember them from a previous visit.
- Detail** 3. The phrase *considered it an honor* in line 17 is closest to ____.
- was angry
 - thought it was strange
 - felt respected
 - thought it was useful
- Detail** 4. Kublai Khan used _____ to deliver messages to his people.
- runners
 - the Polos
 - horse riders
 - birds
- Inference** 5. Marco Polo saw that asbestos cloth, paper money, and coal were used in the East. According to the passage, this shows that ____.
- the West already knew about and used these inventions
 - the East had learned various technologies from the West
 - the West had forgotten the technologies used in the East
 - the East was ahead of the West in some areas of technology
- Sequence** 6. What did Marco Polo do after he left China but before he returned to Venice?
- He wrote a book.
 - He crossed Asia by land.
 - He visited India and Sumatra.
 - He undertook a mission for Kublai Khan.
- Reference** 7. In line 45, the word *It* refers to ____.
- culture
 - the book
 - completion
 - his contribution



Did You Know?

Some people believe Marco Polo introduced pasta to Europe from China. He does mention "macaroni or other sorts of pasta" in his journal. However, Europeans had probably known about these foods for many years.

Reading Skill

Understanding Time Clauses/ Time Relationships

In addition to *before* and *after*, we can also indicate time relationships with *when*, *as soon as*, *as*, and *while*. These words can begin a sentence (with a comma following the clause), or be used in the middle of a sentence.

The word *when* can be used when one action happens after another action, or during the same period of time.

Example 1: *When I decided to take a trip to China, I told my parents.*

Example 2: *When he was six, he moved to another city.*

Use *as soon as* when one action happens immediately after another action.

Example: *As soon as I landed in Beijing, I texted my parents.*

Use *while* and *as* when two actions happen at the same time.

Example 1: *I felt very excited as the taxi arrived at my hotel.*

Example 2: *I made a lot of new friends while I was in China.*

A. Noticing. Find and underline the words *before*, *after*, *when*, *as soon as*, *as*, and *while* in the passage on pages 117–119.

B. Sequencing. For each pair of actions, mark them **1** (happened first) or **2** (happened second). If both actions happened at the same time, mark both **1**.

- _____ Marco Polo met Kublai Khan.
_____ Marco Polo traveled for three and a half years.
- _____ Marco Polo's trip started.
_____ Marco Polo became a teenager.
- _____ Marco Polo was in the service of Kublai Khan.
_____ Marco Polo was able to learn and experience many new things.
- _____ Marco Polo was on an ocean voyage.
_____ Marco Polo continued his observations.
- _____ Marco Polo returned home.
_____ Marco Polo completed a book.

Critical Thinking Discuss with a partner. Who do you think gained more from the Polos' visit to China—Marco Polo or Kublai Khan? Why?



▲ Marco Polo

Vocabulary Practice

A. Definitions. Complete the definitions using the correct words from the box.

administration admire informal mineral objective undertake

- Your _____ is what you are trying to achieve.
- If you _____ someone, you like and respect him or her.
- A(n) _____ is a solid, naturally occurring substance.
- When you _____ a task or job, you start doing it.
- The _____ of a country is conducted by its government.
- If a situation is _____, it is usually relaxed, friendly, or unofficial.

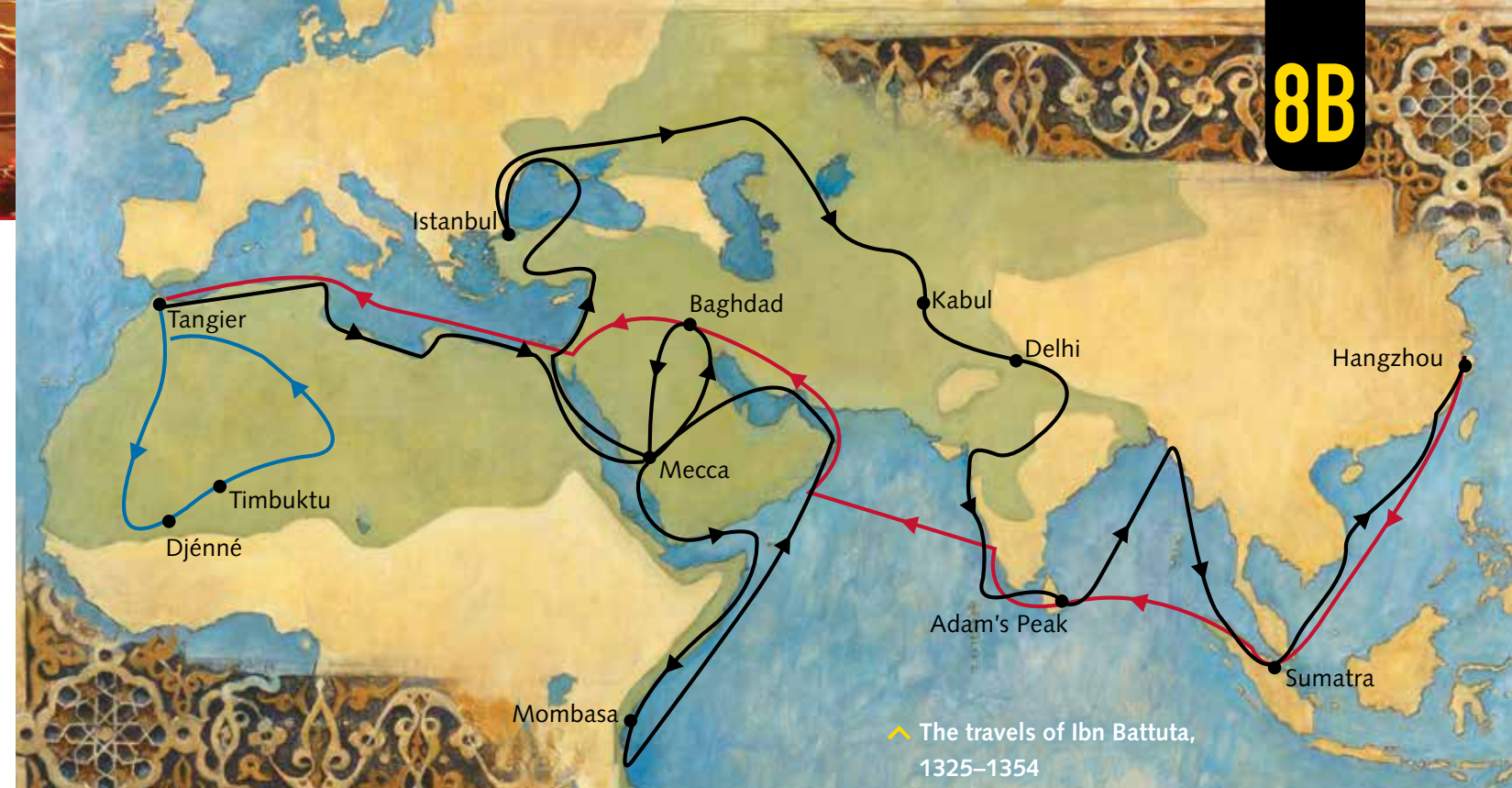
B. Completion. Choose the correct words to complete the information below.

After surviving the dangers of the ocean **1. (voyage / mineral)** from China, Marco Polo reached his home city of Venice. But more troubles waited for him there. Italy at that time was not united under one government, and the **2. (administration / admiration)** of each city was left to different powerful families. So the different cities were often at war with each other. During fighting between Venice and Genoa, Marco Polo was put in prison. There, he met Rustichello, a writer of fairy tales, who **3. (undertook / contributed)** to Polo's future fame by helping him create a(n) **4. (journal / objective)** of his travels. Because of this book, many people around the world **5. (perceive / admire)** Polo's achievements as an explorer. Today, Marco Polo is **6. (perceived / contributed)** by many to be one of the greatest explorers that ever lived.

Word Partnership

Use *undertake* with: (v) undertake
an action, undertake **a project**,
undertake **a task**.

Marco Polo completed his journal for "all people who wish to know . . . the different regions of the world." >



The travels of Ibn Battuta,
1325–1354

Islamic Lands,
14th Century

- ▶ Route from Tangier to China
- ▶ Return route
- ▶ Round trip in Sahara

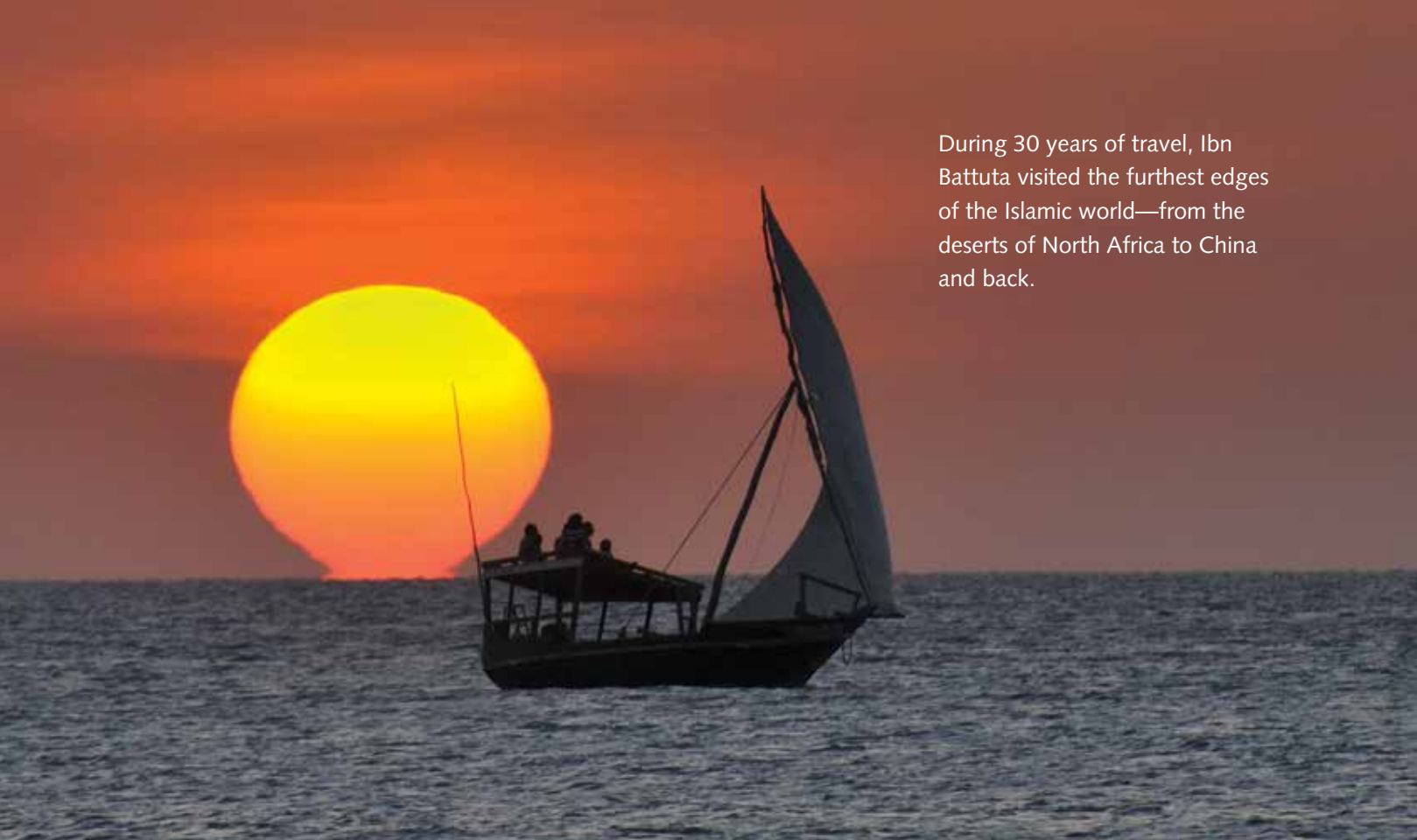
THE TRAVELS OF IBN BATTUTA

Before You Read

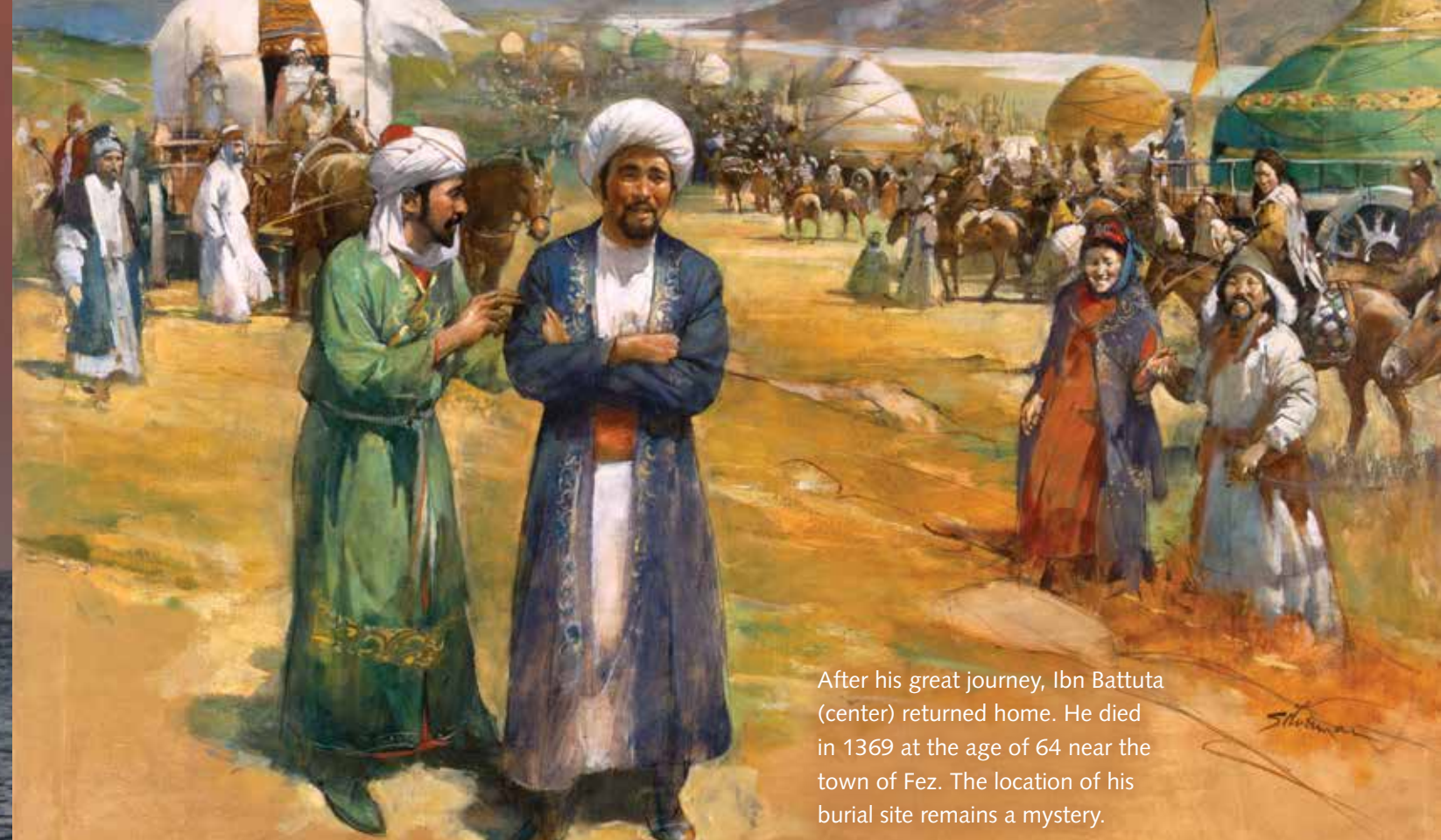
A. Reading Maps. Ibn Battuta was born in Tangier, in what is now Morocco. He was a great explorer, and traveled to many places around the world during the 14th century. Look at the map of his travels and try to guess the answers to these questions.

- Which person traveled further, Ibn Battuta or Marco Polo?
- How many places did Ibn Battuta visit?
- For how many years was Ibn Battuta traveling?

B. Scan. Now quickly read the first two paragraphs on page 124 to check your guesses.



During 30 years of travel, Ibn Battuta visited the furthest edges of the Islamic world—from the deserts of North Africa to China and back.



After his great journey, Ibn Battuta (center) returned home. He died in 1369 at the age of 64 near the town of Fez. The location of his burial site remains a mystery.

1 | The Long Journey

“I left Tangier, my birthplace, the 13th of June, 1325, with the **intention** of making the pilgrimage¹ [to Mecca]. . . . to leave all my friends both female and male, to **abandon** my home as birds abandon their nests.” So begins an old manuscript² in a library in Paris, the travel journal of Ibn Battuta.

Almost two centuries before Columbus, this young Moroccan set off for Mecca. Returning home three decades later, he is now regarded as one of history’s great travelers. Driven by curiosity, he journeyed to **remote** corners of the Islamic world, traveling three times as far as Marco Polo, through 44 modern countries. Though little celebrated in the West, his name is well known among Arabs. In his hometown of Tangier, a square, a hotel, a café, a ferry boat, and even a hamburger are named after him.

Prior to his adventures traveling the world, Ibn Battuta studied in Mecca for several years. However, the urge to travel soon took over. He traveled to India, seeking profitable employment with the Sultan³ of Delhi. On the way, he described his group being attacked in the open country by 80 foot soldiers and two horsemen: “we fought . . . killing one of their horsemen

1 A **pilgrimage** is a trip to a place of religious importance.

2 A **manuscript** is a piece of writing that is handwritten, or an early version of a book.

3 A **sultan** is a ruler in some Islamic countries.

and about twelve of the foot soldiers. . . . I was hit by an arrow and my horse by another, but God in his grace preserved me. . . . We carried the heads of the slain⁴ to the castle of Abu Bak’har . . . and suspended⁵ them from the wall.”

In Delhi, the sultan gave him the position of judge, based on his studies at Mecca. But the sultan had an unpredictable character, and Ibn Battuta was soon looking for an opportunity to leave. When the sultan offered to **finance** a trip to China, Ibn Battuta agreed. He set off in three ships, but **misfortune** struck while he was still on shore. A sudden storm grounded and broke up two ships. Scattering⁶ treasure, the storm drowned many people and horses. As he watched, the third ship, with all his belongings and slaves—one carrying his child—was carried out to sea and never heard from again.

After a lifetime of incredible adventures, Ibn Battuta was finally ordered by the Sultan of Morocco to return home to share his **wisdom** with the world. Fortunately, he **consented** and wrote a book that has been **translated** into numerous languages, allowing people everywhere to read about his **unparalleled** journeys.

4 Someone who has been **slain** has been killed.

5 If you **suspend** something from a high place, you hang it from that place.

6 If things are **scattered**, they have been thrown or dropped so they are spread all over an area.

Multiple Choice. Choose the best answer for each question.

- Gist** 1. What is the passage mainly about?
 - a. Ibn Battuta’s visit to Mecca
 - b. Ibn Battuta’s character
 - c. the adventures of Ibn Battuta
 - d. the books that Ibn Battuta wrote
- Detail** 2. Why did Ibn Battuta first leave Tangier?
 - a. to teach
 - b. to help his family
 - c. to visit Mecca
 - d. to look for a job abroad
- Vocabulary** 3. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the phrase *set off for* in line 6?
 - a. arrived at
 - b. discussed
 - c. left to go to
 - d. decided upon
- Detail** 4. The Sultan of Delhi gave Ibn Battuta the position of judge because _____.
 - a. the sultan needed a translator
 - b. Ibn Battuta had studied in Mecca
 - c. Ibn Battuta had been a judge before
 - d. Ibn Battuta had traveled to many countries
- Reference** 5. What does the word *one* refer to in line 29?
 - a. a ship
 - b. a storm
 - c. a slave
 - d. a mother
- Detail** 6. Why did Ibn Battuta finally return home?
 - a. He was tired of traveling.
 - b. He feared the Sultan of Delhi.
 - c. He didn’t have any more money.
 - d. The Sultan of Morocco asked him to return.
- Inference** 7. The writer of this passage most likely thinks that Ibn Battuta’s journey _____.
 - a. didn’t really happen
 - b. was inspired by Marco Polo’s travels
 - c. was common for people of that time
 - d. should be more well known in the West today

Did You Know?

In Dubai, there is a large shopping mall named after Ibn Battuta. It has six sections named after areas of the world he visited.



Recognizing Participle Clauses

Participle clauses are very common in written English. They show relationships between two or more actions. Recognizing them will help you understand how one action is related to another action.

Participle clauses can use the present participle (-ing) or past participle (-ed). When the sentence shows one subject performing two different actions, use the -ing form for the first verb.

Example: *She stared at the map. She looked for a bus stop.* = *Staring at the map, she looked for a bus stop.*

You should use the -ed form when one action is in the passive voice.

Example: *The residents were rescued by the firefighters. They all survived the fire.* = *Rescued by the firefighters, the residents all survived the fire.*

A. Analyzing. These sentences are from the reading on pages 124–125. Choose the correct participle to complete each sentence. Then check your answers in the reading.

- 1. (**Returning / Returned**) home three decades later, he is now regarded as one of history’s great travelers. (paragraph 2)
- 2. (**Driving / Driven**) by curiosity, he journeyed to remote corners of the Islamic world . . . (paragraph 2)
- 3. Though little (**celebrating / celebrated**) in the West, his name is well known among Arabs. (paragraph 2)
- 4. He traveled to India, (**seeking / sought**) profitable employment with the Sultan of Delhi. (paragraph 3)
- 5. (**Scattering / Scattered**) treasure, the storm drowned many people and horses. (paragraph 4)

B. Combining. Combine the two sentences into one. Make the first sentence a participle clause.

- 1. Ibn Battuta left his friends behind. Ibn Battuta started traveling in 1325.

- 2. Ibn Battuta’s book is known as *Rihla*. His book details his travels in Asia and Africa. _____

Critical Thinking Discuss with a partner. How were the travels of Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta different? How were they similar?

Vocabulary Practice

A. Definitions. Read the information below. Then complete the definitions using the words in **red**.

During his travels, Ibn Battuta suffered many **misfortunes**. Here's one: In his final journey, he traveled to the **remote** land of Mali, with the **intention** of meeting a king who gave his visitors wonderful gifts. Said to be **unparalleled**, these gifts often included large amounts of gold. However, **prior** to Ibn Battuta's arrival, the old king died. The new king, Mansa Sulayman, only gave Ibn Battuta a little food. When he saw his gift, Ibn Battuta could only laugh.

1. An area that is _____ is far away and difficult to get to.
2. If you have the _____ of doing something, you have decided to do it.
3. A person's _____ are bad or unlucky things that happen to them.
4. If something happens _____ to another thing, it happens before it.
5. If you describe something as _____, you are emphasizing that it is bigger, better, or worse than anything else of its kind.

B. Completion. Complete the sentences below with the words in the box.

abandoned consented financed translators wisdom

1. Thanks to the work of many _____, the writings of Ibn Battuta can be read in all major languages.
2. The king and queen of Spain _____ Christopher Columbus's voyage to the New World.
3. Kublai Khan finally _____ to the Polos' request to return to Europe.
4. A good king is one who has great _____ and makes good decisions for his people.
5. Urban explorers explore places within a city, including buildings that have been _____ and now lie empty.

Thesaurus

remote Also look up:
(*adj.*) faraway, distant

The king of Mali,
Mansa Sulayman >



VIEWING The Legend of Marco Polo

Before You Watch

A. Definitions. Here are some words you will hear in the video. Match the words to their definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. formidable • | • a. an area within a country |
| 2. banquet • | • b. to remove earth carefully to find buried objects |
| 3. excavate • | • c. a large, grand meal, usually for many people |
| 4. province • | • d. inspiring fear or respect by being large or powerful |



^ The Polos leave Venice for their travels to the Far East. The drawing also shows the strange lands they visited.

While You Watch

A. Completion. Many people believe Marco Polo visited China, but others argue that he didn't. As you watch, choose the correct words from the video to complete the chart.

Arguments against Polo visiting China	Arguments for Polo visiting China
<p>There are factual 1. (statements / inaccuracies) in Polo's book, such as saying a 2. (battle / wedding) took place in the wrong year.</p> <p>The book describes things that are not possible, such as a 3. (tiger / fish) that is a hundred feet long with 4. (feathers / fur) on it.</p>	<p>There are details in his book that couldn't have been 5. (invented / believed) in Europe, such as Polo seeing 6. (camels / coal) for the first time.</p> <p>Polo described a hall big enough for 7. (6,000 / 10,000) people. When the city was excavated, the placement and style of the 8. (buildings / streets) were exactly as Polo had described them.</p>

After You Watch

A. Correction. The captions below are not accurate. Use the information in the video to correct each caption.



1. When Marco Polo wrote his book, he was in jail in China.



2. Marco Polo set off for China from Venice in 1271 A.D., traveling as a geographer.



3. The Chinese call the Taklamakan Desert the “desert of summer.”



4. Marco Polo claims he went to Shengdu, to Kublai Khan’s spring palace.

B. Discuss. Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. Which arguments do you think are stronger—that Marco Polo did or didn’t visit China?
2. Is there information in this video that supports or doesn’t agree with the reading on pages 117–119? If so, which do you think is more convincing?