



黄建滨 主编

中国文化阅读

1800 单词话中国

Chinese
Culture
Reading
in English



浙江大学出版社
ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS



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1. The Territory of the People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is located in the east of the Asian continent and on the western shore of the Pacific Ocean. Covering an area of about 9.6 million square kilometers, China is the third largest country in the world, next to Russia and Canada. China spans over 49 latitudes from north to south, and extends over 62 longitudes from east to west.

China is bordered by Korea to the east, Mongolia to the north, Russia to the northeast, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the northwest; Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bhutan to the west



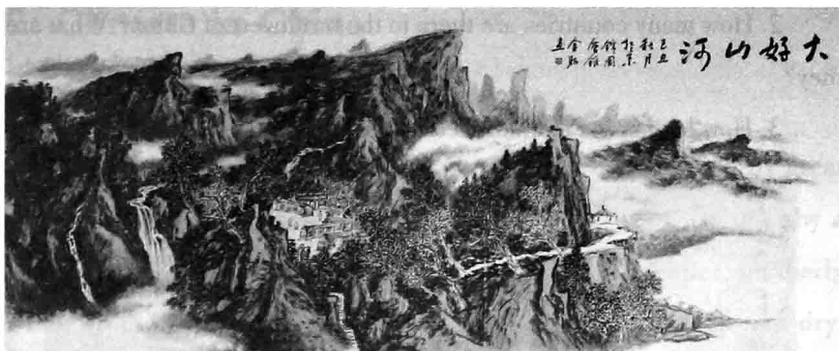
and southwest; and Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam to the south.

The Bohai Sea is China's continental sea, while the Yellow Sea, East China Sea and South China Sea are marginal seas of the Pacific Ocean. China's coastline is about 32,000 kilometers long, with the mainland coastline measuring almost 18,000 kilometers long and the island coastline 14,000 kilometers.

New Words and Expressions

territory	<i>n.</i>	领域
continent	<i>n.</i>	大陆
western	<i>a.</i>	西边的; 西部的
square	<i>a.</i>	平方的
latitude	<i>n.</i>	纬度
longitude	<i>n.</i>	经度
Kazakistan	<i>n.</i>	哈萨克斯坦
Kyrgyzstan	<i>n.</i>	吉尔吉斯斯坦
Tajikistan	<i>n.</i>	塔吉克斯坦
Afghanistan	<i>n.</i>	阿富汗
Pakistan	<i>n.</i>	巴基斯坦
Nepal	<i>n.</i>	尼泊尔
Bhutan	<i>n.</i>	不丹
Myanmar	<i>n.</i>	缅甸
Vietnam	<i>n.</i>	越南
marginal	<i>a.</i>	临界的
coastline	<i>n.</i>	海岸线

1. The Territory of the People's Republic of China



Exercise One

Directions: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The People's Republic of China (PRC) is on the eastern shore of the Pacific Ocean.
2. China is the largest country in the world.
3. China spans over 49 latitudes from east to west.
4. China is bordered by Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam to the south.
5. China's coastline is about 32,000 kilometers.

Exercise Two

Directions: Answer the following questions.

1. Which is the largest country in the world, Russia or Canada?

2. How many countries are there to the northwest of China? What are they?

3. How long is the mainland coastline of China?



2. Climate in China

China has a continental monsoon climate characterized by great variety. Most of China lies in the North Temperate Zone, featured by a warm climate and clear division between seasons. In winter, northerly winds from high latitude areas keep the northern part cold and dry; in summer, monsoons from eastern and southern coastal areas bring warmth and moisture.

In northern China, summer is warm and short, while winter is cold and long. In southern China, summer is long, humid and hot, while winter is short and warm, with the temperature rarely below freezing. In central China, division between seasons is clear—summer is hot, long and humid, while winter is short and cold. In northwestern China, such as Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, summer is dry and hot and winter is formidably cold. On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau (青藏高原), winter is extremely cold and summer is short and warm, with great difference in temperature between day and night.



New Words and Expressions

climate	<i>n.</i>	气候
continental	<i>a.</i>	大陆的
monsoon	<i>n.</i>	季风
temperate	<i>a.</i>	温带的
zone	<i>n.</i>	地区
northerly	<i>a.</i>	北方的
division	<i>n.</i>	区分
coastal	<i>a.</i>	沿海的
moisture	<i>n.</i>	潮湿
humid	<i>a.</i>	湿润的
temperature	<i>n.</i>	温度
formidably	<i>ad.</i>	可怕地
Tibet	<i>n.</i>	西藏
plateau	<i>n.</i>	高原
extremely	<i>ad.</i>	极端地



Exercise One

Directions: Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

1. The climate in China has great variety.
2. The whole China lies in the North Temperate Zone.
3. In winter, the northern part of China is cold and dry.
4. In summer, monsoons from eastern and southern coastal areas bring warmth.
5. In Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, winter is warm.

Exercise Two

Directions: Answer the following questions.

1. What kind of climate does China have?
2. What is the weather like in southern China in summer?
3. What do you know about the climate on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau?



3. The Chinese Writing System

The Chinese language is the oldest writing language that remains today in the world. Chinese people began to record their daily life by inscribing characters on turtle shells or animal bones, which were discovered as the most ancient style of character. In the Western Zhou Dynasty, the shell-bone inscriptions were developed into bronze inscriptions. Then Chinese characters appeared as “seal characters” (篆书). In the Qin Dynasty, the first emperor Qinshihuang unified the writing forms of characters into the “lesser seal characters” (小篆). All characters were picture-like, beautiful in appearance but very complicated to write. To hasten the writing speed, the official script (隶书) was created and further developed into the regular script (楷书), which has been used till today. Later, for the sake of calligraphic art, the running script (行书) and cursive script (草书) came into being.

