UNIT 3 · LESSON 1

Source detectives

What can a source tell us?

AIMS

How confident are you now? Circle one face for each aim at the end of the lesson.

Content Find out what different sources can and cannot tell us. ☹ 😐 ☺

Language Understand and use key words about sources. ☹ 😐 ☺

Skills Choose the most useful sources for a question. ☹ 😐 ☺

Think: See, think, wonder

Look closely at Source A on the screen. Write one idea for each.

SEE

I can see _____

THINK

I think _____

WONDER

I wonder _____



Source A

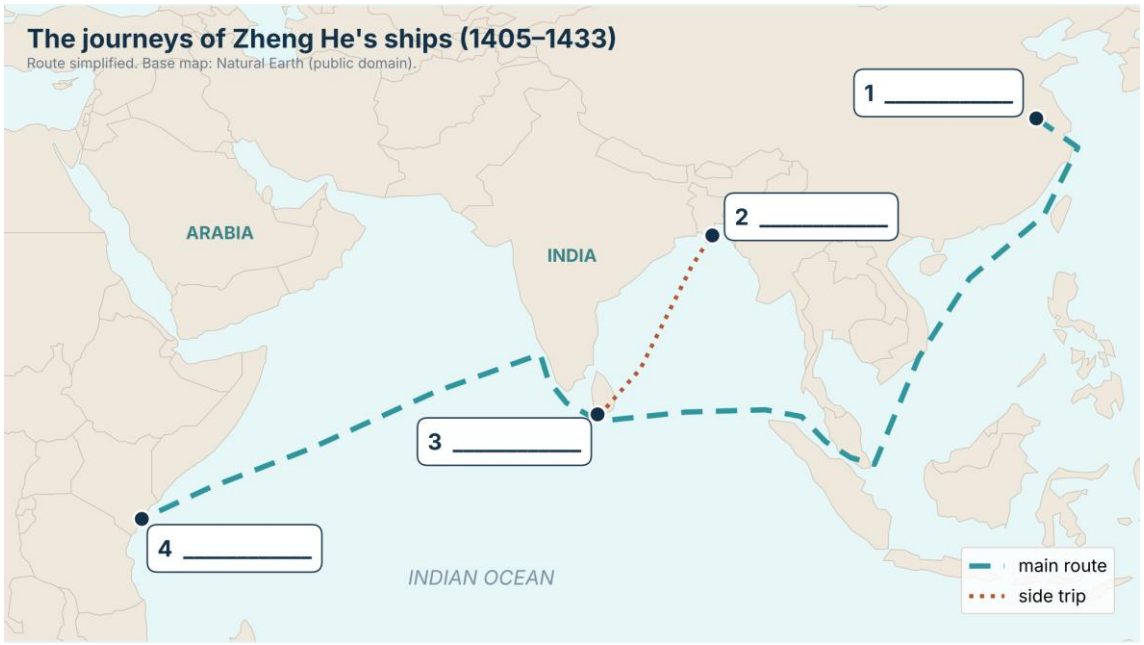
Listen: Meet Zheng He

Listen twice. Take notes in bullet points: words and numbers, not full sentences.

1 Who? Who was Zheng He? • _____ • _____ • _____	**2 When?** When did the ships sail? • _____ • _____ • _____
3 Where? Name 3 places. • _____ • _____ • _____	**4 Why?** Give 2 reasons. • _____ • _____ • _____

Label: Seven long journeys

Write the places in boxes 1–4. Use the listening and what you already know.



WORD BANK China · Bengal · Sri Lanka · Malindi (East Africa)

Read: Life on the treasure ships

Read the text. Then do the true or false task on page 3.

A treasure ship was like a small floating town. Each ship carried hundreds of people. There were sailors and soldiers, but also cooks, doctors and interpreters: people who could speak other languages. One interpreter, Ma Huan, later wrote a book about the places he visited.

The sailors needed to find their way across the open sea. They used a magnetic compass, and at night they looked at the stars. They also used special sea maps that showed the routes between ports.

The ships could not sail at any time. They waited for the monsoon winds, which change direction at different times of the year. Because of this, one journey could take about two years.

The ships carried silk, porcelain and other gifts from China. They came back with spices, precious stones and medicines.

interpreter = a person who changes words from one language to another **monsoon winds** = strong winds that change with the seasons **porcelain** = fine white pottery


silk


porcelain


spices


precious stones

Modern illustrations

Check: True or false?

Circle T or F. Then correct the false sentences.

1	Each treasure ship carried hundreds of people.	T F
2	There were doctors on the ships, but no cooks.	T F
3	An interpreter is a person who can speak other languages.	T F
4	Ma Huan wrote his book before he joined the ships.	T F
5	The sailors used a compass and the stars to find their way.	T F
6	The ships waited for the right winds before they sailed.	T F
7	One journey could take about two months.	T F
8	The ships came back to China with spices, precious stones and porcelain.	T F

Learn: Key words

Say each word. Read the meaning. Write the word in a language you know.

WORD	MEANING	IN MY LANGUAGE
source	something that gives us information about the past	
evidence	information that helps answer a question	
primary source	made at the time, or by someone who was there	
secondary source	made later by someone who was not there. It explains or comments on the past.	
feature	something you can see or notice	
specific	exact and clear	
captive	kept by people, not free	

Read: Four sources

Look at each source and read the caption. Use them for your detective notes on page 5.

Source A: Tribute Giraffe with Attendant



Based on a painting by **Shen Du**, a court artist.

Nanjing, China, **1414**.

There is **Chinese writing** at the top.

Tribute Giraffe with Attendant. Philadelphia Museum of Art. Public domain.

Source B: a stone from Sri Lanka



Dated **1409**.

Found in **Sri Lanka**.

The writing is in **three languages**: Chinese, Tamil and Persian.

It lists gifts from Zheng He's ships to a temple.

Galle stone, 1409. Colombo National Museum, Sri Lanka. Photo: Kanatonian, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Source C: an old Chinese sea map



From a Chinese book finished in **1621**.

It shows sea routes to **India**, **Sri Lanka** and **Africa**.

Find **Malindi** at the bottom.

Many historians think it was copied from the sailors' own route maps.

Mao Kun map, from the Wubei Zhi (1621). Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. English labels added.

Source D: a page from a school textbook

Chapter 3 · China and the Indian Ocean

The giraffe that came to China

In 1414, a giraffe arrived in China. It was a gift for the Emperor from the king of Bengal. But the giraffe first came from Malindi, a city in East Africa. Visitors from Malindi took it to Bengal, and Zheng He's ships brought it to China. People in China had never seen a giraffe before. Many people thought it was a magical, lucky animal.



Malindi, East Africa: a modern illustration. page 47

Write: Detective notes

Ask the three questions about each source on page 4. Write short notes, not sentences. Copy row A from the teacher's model.

1 **What is it?** painting · object · map · text · primary or secondary?
2 **What does it show? What does it suggest?** see · think
3 **What can't it tell us?** the limitation

	WHAT IS IT?	IT SHOWS… (SEE)	IT SUGGESTS… (THINK)	IT CANNOT TELL US…
A				
B				
C				
D				

Use the evidence: How did a giraffe get to China?

Talk with a partner first: which two sources are most useful? Why? Your partner asks: "Which detail shows that?" Then write 3 sentences. Use one specific detail from each source.

Source ___ suggests that _____

_____

This is supported by Source ___, which _____

_____

However, Source ___ cannot tell us _____

_____

Check ☐ **I answer the question** ☐ **a specific detail from each source** ☐ **one limitation**

On your own: a new question

What is the evidence that Zheng He's ships visited Bengal? Use Sources E and F. Write 3 sentences on your own.

Source E: Ma Huan describes Bengal

Ma Huan sailed with Zheng He as an interpreter. Later he wrote a book about the places they visited.

From Sumatra, the ships sailed north-west for about twenty-one days and arrived at Chittagong, in Bengal. There, people changed to small boats and went up the river to a town called Sonargaon.

Bengal is a large country with walled cities. Rich people build ships and trade with other countries. People pay with a silver coin called a tanka. For small things, they use sea shells. They make very fine cotton cloth.

Adapted from Ma Huan's book (written about 1416–1451). English translation 1895, public domain.

Source F: a coin from Bengal



A silver **tanka** from Bengal. Made about **1493–1519**.

tanka = a silver coin

Silver tanka, Sultanate of Bengal. American Numismatic Society, public domain.

Source E suggests that _____

_____

This is supported by Source F, which _____

_____

However, _____

_____

Check ☐ **a specific detail from E** ☐ **a detail from F** ☐ **one limitation**

STRETCH **Which source is more useful for this question, E or F? Why?**

_____

_____

_____