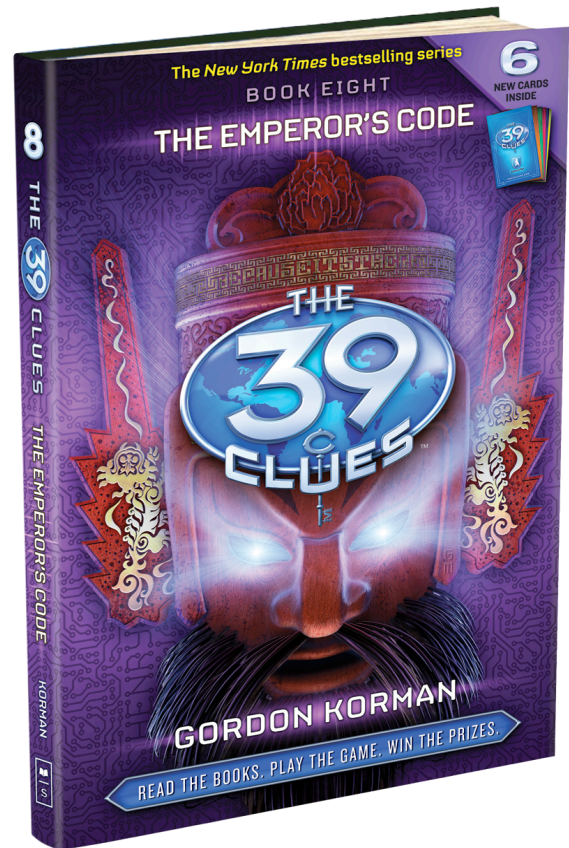


*The 39 Clues Book #8:  
The Emperor's Code*  
Teacher's Guide

**Theme:**

Reading in the Content Area –  
Exploring Ancient Civilizations



**Guide to The 39 Clues Book #8: *The Emperor's Code***  
**by Gordon Korman**

Theme of this section:

***Reading in the Content Area – Exploring Ancient Civilizations***

**What the Book is About**

As the race to find the 39 Clues builds to its explosive finish, Amy and Dan must explore an ancient culture and steal a Clue guarded by thousands of the world's best-trained soldiers. It's the most dangerous Clue search yet. As their enemies crowd in, Amy and Dan find themselves separated for the first time ever. The choice lies before them – find the next Clue, or find their way back to each other.

## About the Author

Gordan Korman is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of The 39 Clues Book Two: *One False Note*. He wrote his first book at age 12 and has gone on to publish more than 55 titles, including the *Everest, Island, Dive, and Kidnapped* trilogies; the *On the Run* series; and *Swindle*. Gordan lives with his family in Great Neck, New York.

## Developing Content Area Reading Strategies

The 39 Clues series brings the magic of fiction and crosses it with non-fiction facts about historical figures and ancient cultures. Capture the adventurous spirit of the series to teach your students strategies to develop their content area reading skills. In *The Emperor's Code*, students will learn about ancient China while improving their understanding of this important culture.

### ***Step One: Before Reading – Activate Knowledge***

Build a base of information upon which students can draw when reading *The Emperor's Code*. The plot will have more meaning if students build their schema of ancient China. Before students begin reading the story, have them brainstorm ideas about where Dan and Amy will explore in China. What modern day cities could they visit? What historical places could the action take place? Of course Amy loves museums...what one will she make Dan visit? Do your students have more of a Holt-like knowledge of China? Help them build a foundation by exploring maps, watching videos of China or visiting web sites before beginning the book.

### ***Step Two: During Reading***

Students should clarify, visualize and build connections to improve their comprehension while they read. Allow students to explore their natural curiosity about the people, places or historical events that intrigue them while they read the book. Encourage them to use their Amy-like research skills to discover more information about The Forbidden City, The Great Wall of China or the Terracotta Army.

### ***Step Three: After Reading***

This final step expands students' prior knowledge, builds connections, and deepens their understanding. Students should confirm predictions, reflect and ask questions. The 39 Clues series allows students to synthesize and make connections by comparing and contrasting historical cultures, communities, and traditions. For instance, The 39 Clues Book 4: *Beyond the Grave*, plunges readers deep into an ancient pyramid in Egypt. Help your students examine how China and Egypt were similar and different. Students can gain a perspective by creating a timeline to understand that Chinese

history is thousands of years old unlike United States history which is only hundreds of years old! Finally, the Chinese are responsible for many great inventions. Try these hands-on activities with your class to deepen their understanding of this great civilization.

## **Projects to Explore Famous Chinese Inventions**

### ***Paper***

China was the first nation who invented paper during the Han Dynasty (206BC-23AD), but the paper was generally very thick, coarse and uneven in texture. While the first paper was made from pounded and disintegrated hemp fibers, it is easiest to teach kids to make paper using paper. First, tear up newspaper into ½ inch squares and let it soak in hot water. Stir the shredded paper until it disintegrates into sludge. Add food coloring, if you wish to make colored paper. Next, take a window screen or a frame with screen material attached to it and dip it into the sludge mixture. Carefully, lift out the screen in a scooping motion and press and flatten the sludge onto the screen. Flip screen over and allow paper to dry on a cloth or paper towel.

### ***Compass***

The first compass was invented in China around the 200's AD. These compasses were very simple and were made with an iron needle and cork. Students can easily make one just like them.

You will need: one clear plastic cup, one bar magnet, needle, cork, and water. Stroke one end of the magnet along the needle, about 30 times in the same direction. After magnetizing the needle, press the needle through the cork until the cork is centered on the needle. Fill the plastic cup with water. Place the cork with needle in the cup of water. As the needle floats and comes to rest, the thickest end of the needle will point north.

### ***Kite***

Finally, end your unit with a celebration of flight using another one of China's inventions, the kite! Students can create and build their own kites or bring one in from home to fly. Your class will fill the sky with an invention that was created over 2,000 years ago and is the forerunner to the airplane. Just think how the invention of the kite has impacted the Cahills' search for the clues!