

Kids & Schools Tools

The Great Wall of China

The Great Wall of China is one of the 21 finalist candidates in the campaign to choose the New 7 Wonders of the World. The winners of this unique vote will be announced on July 7, 2007 – 07.07.07 and will become part of history. They will be recognized as monuments that have truly global meaning—they are part of our common cultural heritage. We can all be proud of the 21 finalists, since each of them is a unique monument that belongs to its particular culture and country in a very special way.

The Great Wall was built to link existing fortifications into a united defense system and keep invading nomadic Mongol tribes out of China. It is the largest man-made monument ever built and is the only one often said (and sometimes disputed!) to be visible from space.

Like a huge dragon, the Great Wall winds across plateaus, deserts, grasslands and mountains, stretching some 6,700 km (4,163 miles) from East to West. Over the more than 2,000 years that the wall has been standing, some areas have fallen apart or even disappeared. Yet, the remarkable architectural grandeur and historical significance still attract hundreds of thousands of tourists to the Great Wall every year.

The Great Wall was built as a defensive fortification by three states: Yan, Zhao and Qin. The Great Wall went through constant extensions and repairs in later dynasties. Construction on the first section began between the 7th and 6th century BC, and the last work on the wall was done between the 14th and 17th centuries. In fact, it began as independent walls for different states when it was first built, and did not become the "Great" wall until the Qin Dynasty. Emperor Qin Shihuang succeeded in his effort to have the walls joined together to fend off invasions from in the north after China's unification. However, the advantages of the enormous barrier faded with the arrival of gunpowder and other weaponry. In any case, the Great Wall has served as a monument of the Chinese nation throughout history.

The wall was originally built of stone, wood, grass and earth. Later, in the Ming Dynasty, bricks were produced in kilns set up along the wall. The bricks were transported by men carrying them on their backs, donkeys, mules and even by goats with a brick tied to their head being driven up a mountain.

Many legends exist about the Great Wall, such as the famous story of Meng Jiangnu, set during the Qin Dynasty (221-206 B.C.). Meng Jiangnu's husband, Fan Qiliang, was sent by federal officials to work on the Great Wall. Having heard nothing from him for months, she went to look for him. By the time she reached the wall, her husband had already died. She began to cry desperately and her howls caused part of the Great Wall to collapse. This story is said in China to show how the Great Wall was built by tens of thousands of Chinese commoners, many of whom died—and were buried in the wall.

The Great Wall of China is incredible proof of Perseverance & Persistence!



If you want to find out more about the exciting campaign to name the New 7 Wonders of the World, please go to the New7Wonders website at www.new7wonders.com.

07.07.07

Official Declaration of the New 7 Wonders of the World

... be part of the making of history!

www.new7wonders.com