## The Imperial Exams L1 Name:

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| **Imperial Exams:** to become a government official in the Chinese Empire, you had to pass an exam.  Those who passed got degrees and became *nobles*.  They also had multiple levels. The lowest degrees allowed people to do jobs like tax collector and head of the local police. The highest degrees allowed for jobs like leader of the army or assistants to the Emperor himself.  *Noble*: noun. A person of high social standing like a lord. | **What was the Imperial Exam?**  **What did you get for passing?**  **What did you need a degree to do?** |
| The exam made China more equal and fair than other countries in the world.  Sons of nobles could not rely on their parent’s name to get them through life. They had to study for years to pass the exam and many would fail to do so, causing them to lose their noble status.  Even poor people could take the exam if they could get enough money to pay the fee. | **Why did the exam make China fairer than other countries at the time?** |
| **Content:** the exam, however, did not test your ability to do the job. It tested knowledge and analysis of Confucianism.  The basis of the test were 9 old books called the Four Books and Five Classics. For the higher levels of the test, you basically needed to have these books *memorized*.  The tests were extremely difficult. The lowest degree, the provincial, had only a 1-2% pass rate.  *Memorize*: verb. To know something so well that you can repeat it perfectly word-for-word without any help. | **What was the Imperial Exam testing?**  **What would you need to pass the exam?**  **How many people passed the exam?** |
| **Pacifying:** the imperial exam was a major tool in *pacifying* conquered people.  The bureaucrats in China were viewed as wise, educated people. This made people happy to be ruled by China.  Secondly, the exam gave even the lowliest people a chance to become nobles. This again pacified commoners.  *Pacify*: verb. To keep people from resisting your government. | **What are the 2 ways in which the exam pacified?** |
| **Assimilation:** Chinese imperial culture was based heavily on Confucianism.  The exams made it so that you could only become a noble by spending years of your life studying Confucianism.  This forced people to embrace Chinese culture if they wanted to become nobility. It also was only offered in the Chinese language, so it made people learn the language as well.  *Assimilate*: verb. To become part of the dominant culture of an area. | **What are the 2 ways in which the exam helped assimilate non-Chinese people?** |
| **Good Administration:** There were definitely problems with the Chinese government. It was often viewed as overly *complex* and hard to understand.  However, it was centuries ahead of the rest of the world. Government officials in China had to be educated, unlike anywhere else in the world until about 1600 AD.  The Empire generally enjoyed a very capable government  *Complex*: adjective. Very complicated, with lots of different pieces. | **What problems were there with the Chinese government?**  **Why was it still a good thing?** |

This is the end of the document. I hope you had fun!