

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 8

#89 The Ming Dynasty (1368AD – 1644AD)

Skills/ Objectives: To train students' reading, speaking, listening and writing skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

Qt 1: Do you know why the people of China were so supportive of Zhu Yuanzhang in establishing the Ming Dynasty to replace Yuan Dynasty? Try to find the answer from the main article named below.

Try to find the answers from the main article mentioned below.

Vocabulary

1. misery (noun): great unhappiness.
2. expedition (noun): an organized journey with a particular purpose.
3. exploration (noun): an activity to find out about something.
4. reign (verb): to rule a country as the king or queen.
5. fade (verb): to lose in colour or strength.
6. undertaking (noun): a serious piece of work.
7. amass (verb): to collect items together.

The answers to relevant questions in the preceding set of exercises No. 88: The Yuan Dynasty (1271AD – 1368AD) are as follows:

Answers:

Qt 1: Foreign trade increased in China during the Yuan Dynasty because the empire was vast in size.

Qt 2: According to the article, one reason for the short life of the Yuan Dynasty was that the Mongols were never totally sinicized.

PART 2: Article for Reading

Let us read the following article of the Khan Academy posted on the web:

An introduction to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644)

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/imperial-china/ming-dynasty/a/an-introduction-to-the-ming-dynasty-13681644>

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Let us practice listening with the following stories:

Global History Review: The Ming Dynasty
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AtHGNZs6Urs>

BBC In Our Time: Matteo Ricci and the Ming Dynasty
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkFpAmjTGDU>

The Voyages of Zheng He
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_Elh_jo_dc

PART 4: Writing Practice

Did you notice the following well-expressed sentence in the article:

“From these humble beginnings rose a dynasty (that was to be ruled by seventeen emperors over a period of 276 years).”

Disregarding the italicized relative clause starting with “that”, we see the main sentence expressed with inversion of the normal sentence order “subject – verb – prepositional phrase”. The writer put the sentence in the order of “prepositional phrase – verb – subject”, i.e.:

From these humble beginnings (*prepositional phrase*) – rose (*verb*)
– a dynasty (*subject*).....

This style of writing using inversion allows us to describe a background for emphasis in this prepositional phrase and it adds poetic beauty to the whole sentence as well. Here is another example:

“On top of the high mountain stood a statue of the national hero.”

Now, can you try to write two sentences with inversion? **Send your writing to:** see.u@cccu.edu.hk. Remember! Our SEE U teachers are always ready to give you feedback.