

# Academic Essay Model

Title **The Silk Road: describe its development over time, how it was used and give reasons for its decline.**

| Introduction                             |  |
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| * General topic of research              | S.R. - Trade in goods 1 <sup>st</sup> - indirect = ideas/knowledge   |
| * Background and/or history of the topic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- S.R. 1,600 years in existence // (Evans, 2000)</li> <li>- S.R. 5,000 miles long (Trade on the Silk Road, 2002)</li> </ul> |
| * Define key term/s                      | > [To be clear] S.R. not 1 but 3+ roads: India, Arabia, Russia (Smith, 2006) - named in 1877 (Evans, 2000)   |
| * Why topic interesting and/or important | - Interesting b/c it shows trade ALWAYS imp. in human history... SR == Globalisation <u>today</u>  |
| * Aim of the essay                       |  |
| * Sequence of the main points            | [Purpose] provide details <u>on</u> ... S.R.<br>[Specifically,] growth (D), uses (U) and lastly its FALL (F)   |

| Body Paragraph 1: <span style="background-color: yellow; padding: 2px;">Development over time [2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE - 15<sup>th</sup> c.]</span> |   |
|---|---|
| * Main idea (a sentence setting out the paragraph's focus)  | lasted > 1,500 years - overland - links East to West  |
| * Supporting details, explanations & examples   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> c. BCE - <u>Han Dynasty</u> - diplomat (Zhang Qian)</li> <li>- 2. Romans/Greeks/Byzantium all benefited/used</li> <li>- 3. 8<sup>th</sup> c. - 10/11/12<sup>th</sup> c. <u>Tang Dynasty</u> --&gt; peak of SR Trade - China supports trade and gives security</li> <li>- 4. 15<sup>th</sup> c. <u>Ming Dynasty</u> &lt;-- trade on SR goes down b/c sea and b/c of "isolationist" policies of Ming</li> <li>- 5. 1877 - SR gets name - b/c of German explore (sees imp. of Silk...)</li> </ul> <p>^^ (Evans, 2000)</p> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Body Paragraph 2:</b> <span style="background-color: yellow; padding: 2px;">USES [trade - ideas - tech. - diseases]</span> |  |
| <p>* Main idea (a sentence setting out the paragraph's focus)</p> <p>* Supporting details, explanations &amp; examples</p>    | <p>Trade (goods/products) = Key purpose of S.R.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- indirect exchanges == culture - ideas - technologies - and the negative: diseases (?? Soldiers for wars ??)</li> <li>- Trade = silk/satin (materials)</li> <li>- Trade = diamonds/rubies/pearls (gem stones)</li> <li>^^ (Trade on the Silk Road, 2002)</li> <br/> <li>- "Information Super Highway"</li> <li>^^ (Evans, 2000)</li> </ul> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Body Paragraph 3:</b> <span style="background-color: lightgreen; padding: 2px;">Reasons for FALL [Sea + Ming Dynasty]</span> |  |
| <p>* Main idea (a sentence setting out the paragraph's focus)</p> <p>* Supporting details, explanations &amp; examples</p>      | <p>Reasons ( &gt; than one)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KEY REASON == ea / Trade by sea</li> </ul> <p>Sea benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) More flexibility</li> <li>(2) Safer</li> <li>(3) Easier ... [ Quicker / Cheaper ]</li> </ol> <p>S.R. ---- crosses many countries = Taxes and wars (4)</p> <p>(5) Ming Dynasty = "isolationist" didn't support/want trade with the West.</p> <p>^^ (Best, n.d.)</p> |

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| <b>Source references, formatted to APA citations</b>  |
| <p>(Best, n.d.)</p> <p>(Evans, 2000)</p> <p>(Smith, 2006)</p> <p>(Trade on the Silk Road, 2002)</p> |

| Conclusion   |  |
|--|--|
| <p>* Restate the essay's aim</p> <p>Summarise the main points covered</p> <p><b>Select 2 or more of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal opinion/suggestion</li> <li>• Call for further research</li> <li>• Predict future developments</li> </ul> | <p><i>[In conclusion,] focused on long-interesting-history of S.R.</i></p> <p><i>&gt; Began with (D), moved on to (U) finished with (F)</i></p> <p><i>Opinion: amazing - trade (direct) - leads to (indirect - culture/ideas/diseases) ... like internet today.</i></p> <p><i>&gt; research : about language and development words/phrases</i><br/> <u>LINKED 2</u> "trade"</p> <p><i>&gt; In future +++tourists to travel the SR 2 see historic things.</i></p> |

## EXAMPLE ESSAY

Like the internet today, the Silk Road of yesterday was used to exchange many things. The Silk road lasted for about 1,600 years and was around 5,000 miles long (Evans, 2000). To be clear, the Silk Road was actually many roads from Asia (China) to Europe. Also, the road was actually three roads and included Central Asia, India and Arabia (Smith, 2006). The subject is important because it is like globalisation today, trade leads to exchanges of cultures and ideas. The purpose of this essay is provide some details about this historic trade route. Specifically it will cover the Silk Road's development, uses and also why its importance finally decreased.

The silk road started during the Han dynasty in 200 BCE. The trade and exchange of knowledge began with Zhang Qian who was a Chinese diplomat (Evans, 2000). Trade increased and was at a peak around the 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries during the Tang dynasty. Interestingly the silk road, which crossed deserts and mountains, only got its name in 1877. However by the 15<sup>th</sup> century trade decreased. Firstly because of more trade by sea and secondly because of the Ming dynasty, they were "isolationist" and did not like trade (Evans, 2000).

The Silk Road's main purpose was to exchange goods. The goods traded on the road included luxuries items such as silk, satin and precious gems (Trade on the Silk Road, 2002). However, an indirect use of the road was to exchange ideas, knowledge and cultures from East to West and West to East. Actually the route is sometimes called "the information super highway" (Evans, 2000). Many cultures benefited and developed from these exchanges of language and

technology. However, there were also some disadvantages for example, the spread of diseases along the routes of the many trading roads.

Turning now to the reasons for the eventual decline of the Silk Road. There are two: trade by sea and the policies of the Ming Dynasty. By the 15<sup>th</sup> century, trade by sea was becoming more popular (Best, n.d.). Trade by sea, not overland, was safer and quicker. Therefore, it became easier and cheaper. Also after the Tang dynasty, trade became more difficult and dangerous. Many countries charged taxes and sometimes there were wars (Best, n.d.). In addition the Ming dynasty in China were "isolationists" they did not support trade like the previous Tang dynasty did (Evans, 2000).

In conclusion, this essay focused on the long and interesting history of the Silk Road. It began by looking at its development, then it direct and indirect uses and finished with the reasons for its decline. In my opinion it is amazing how trade in goods leads to indirect positives like sharing culture and technologies and negatives like diseases. I think that more research can be done on the way language changed because of the trade between so many countries. I predict that in the future many more tourists will want to travel on the Silk Road to visit the historic sites and cities.

Words = 499

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