II. After the Zhou dynasty fell in the 8th century BCE, there were clear periods of unrest and other clear dynastic periods. These periods causes and solved domestic and in some cases foreign issues.

a. During periods of unrest there were intense power struggles to establish the next dynasty.
   i. These power struggles sometimes left China open to invasions from foreign people.

b. Although the dynasties would have been some of the strongest or most well followed in their period, some dynasties were weak and fell fast while others were strong and maintained a large presence.
   i. In 221 BCE Shi Huangdi founded the next imperial dynasty, the Qin dynasty.
      1. This dynasty was initially strong, however Huangdi ruled like a tyrant and when his son took over a much weaker ruler the people revolted and the dynasty fell fast.
   ii. In 207 BCE the Qin dynasty was toppled and gave way to the Han dynasty.
      1. The Han dynasty was extremely powerful and ruled for more than 400 years.
      2. Unity was found through religion and this helped establish a core political system.
      a. The political system that was founded also had one of the largest preindustrial bureaucracies.

III. China’s geographical isolation resulted in a very distinct development of culture and also resulted in a very distinctive Chinese identity.

a. The Chinese developed many technological aspects building on what was created in the Huang He dynasty.

b. The Chinese worldview was also very distinct from other regions.
   i. This view was developed in the Shang and Zhou dynasties and intellectually stressed that in the world everything is balanced by an opposite. (Yin and Yang)

c. Chinese religion and politics grew and was modified rapidly overtime, and changed immensely from that in the Shang dynasty.

IV. The Zhou dynasty lasted for a relatively long period 1029 – 258 BCE however it was only flourishing to 700 BCE at which point it began a long decline.

a. The Zhou dynasty never developed a strong government, and kept most of its power through alliances with regional families and princes.
   i. Since they had a weak government they maintained their power by giving relatively large sums of land to family and other supporters.
      1. These supporters would in turn give the government troops and taxes.