The River with Two Names

1. The Yangtze River, winding through eleven Chinese administrative regions (including eight provinces, the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Chongqing administrative municipal district, and the Shanghai administrative municipal district), is not only the longest river in Asia, but also the third longest river on Earth. Only the Nile River (4,200 miles) of Africa and the Amazon River (4,000 miles) of South America outrun the Yangtze River (3,965 miles).

2. As you look up the Yangtze River in the World Atlas, you will notice that it has an alias, Chang Jiang. Literally speaking, the term "Chang Jiang" means the "Long River" in Chinese. So, why does the river have two names? Well, to understand that, we need to travel back in time!

3. When the Han dynasty ended in 220 AD, China entered a long period of disorder that lasted nearly 400 years. During that time, the present-day territory of China was split up into several kingdoms. It wasn't until 581 AD that a man named Yang Chien reunited China. Yang Chien established the Sui dynasty (581 AD - 618 AD) and called himself Emperor Wen (or "Sui Wen Ti" in Chinese). Before he died, Emperor Wen decided to go against the tradition by not passing his throne to his eldest son. Instead, he handpicked his second son, Yang Guang, to be his successor.

4. Yang Guang was a very manipulative and sophisticated character. As Emperor Wen's second son, Yang Guang knew that he didn't have a great chance to be the next emperor. But, he also knew what his parents liked or disliked, so he put on his best behavior in front of his parents at all times. His tricks worked! Both Emperor and Empress Wen believed that Yang Guang was a nice, compassionate, and attentive person. As the result, Emperor Wen made the choice to have Yang Guang succeed him after he passed away.

5. Once Yang Guang became the emperor (Emperor Yang or "Sui Yang Ti" in Chinese), he started to reveal his true colors and eventually became ruthless! He levied heavy taxes to bankroll his extravagant lifestyle. He forced his people to build lavish palaces or other construction projects. He intimidated the neighboring countries to instigate wars. In short, everything that Emperor Yang did was meant to satisfy his personal pleasures and to amplify his already enormous ego! The welfare of his people was simply not his concern!

6. It was during one of his many excursions to the lower section of Chang Jiang that the term "Yangtze River" was born.

7. For centuries, the lower section of Chang Jiang, in the present day Jiang-Su Province and the Shanghai administrative municipal district, is famous for its prosperity, rich culture,
and beautiful scenery. Many Chinese scholars wrote their masterpieces after they visited this area. Attracted to the fame surrounding this section of Chang Jiang, Emperor Yang went there several times. Although he claimed that his visit was intended to be close to his people, everybody knew that he just wanted to have fun and party away!

8 One day when he was sightseeing in a luxurious boat, he decided to test the wits of his guard. He casually asked if the guard knew the name of the river. Eager to please his boss, the guard replied that "Yangtze River" was the name. This was a very smart answer! The guard borrowed the word "Yang" from the prestigious title of "Emperor Yang" and added a respectful word "Tze" to it. Hence, the final result, "Yangtze River", became "Emperor Yang's River". Of course, Emperor Yang was very impressed by the guard's cleverness and gave the guard a promotion. Ever since the guard invented the term, the locals started to call the lower section of Chang Jiang the Yangtze River.

9 Then, more than a thousand years later, European missionaries and traders came to China. They settled in the lower section of Chang Jiang and took residence in cities like Shanghai. When they inquired about the name of the river, the locals replied that it was called the Yangtze River. Not knowing what had transpired before, European missionaries and traders thought that the entire river was called the Yangtze River and recorded so in their maps. The misunderstanding led to the situation that we see today - the longest river in Asia has two names!
## The River with Two Names

1. Where is the Yangtze River?
   - **A** In Chile
   - **B** In China
   - **C** In Cambodia
   - **D** In Canada

2. The Yangtze River is the world's third longest river.
   - **A** True
   - **B** False

3. What is the right order, from the longest to the shortest, of the four rivers -- the Yangtze River, the Amazon River, the Nile River, and the Mississippi River?
   - **A** The Nile River ==> The Amazon River ==> The Yangtze River ==> The Mississippi River
   - **B** The Nile River ==> The Mississippi River ==> The Yangtze River ==> The Amazon River
   - **C** The Mississippi River ==> The Yangtze River ==> The Amazon River ==> The Nile River
   - **D** The Amazon River ==> The Mississippi River ==> The Yangtze River ==> The Nile River

4. How many provinces in China does the Yangtze River flow through?
   - **A** Eight
   - **B** Ten
   - **C** Nine
   - **D** Eleven
## The River with Two Names

### 5. How many administrative regions in China does the Yangtze River flow through?
- A. Ten
- B. Nine
- C. Eight
- D. Eleven

### 6. Why did Emperor Wen pick Yang Guang as his successor?
- A. Because Emperor Wen was tricked to believe that Yang Guang would be a good emperor.
- B. Emperor Wen did not choose Yang Guang to be the next emperor. He died suddenly before he had the chance to nominate a successor.
- C. Because Emperor Wen received a large bribe from Yang Guang.
- D. Because Yang Guang was Emperor Wen's eldest son.

### 7. What was Emperor Yang's ruling style? (Please choose two of the best answers.)
- A. Tyrannical
- B. Compassionate
- C. Dictatorial
- D. Benevolent

### 8. What is the meaning of the term "Yangtze River" in Chinese?
- A. Empress Yang's River
- B. Emperor Wen's River
- C. Sui Dynasty's River
- D. Emperor Yang's River

### 9. According to the locals, what is the Yangtze River?
- A. It is the middle section of Chang Jiang.
- B. It is the upper section of Chang Jiang.
- C. It is the lower section of Chang Jiang.

### 10. Who thought the Yangtze River was the name of the entire river?
- A. Japanese missionaries and traders
- B. American missionaries and traders
- C. Australian missionaries and traders
- D. European missionaries and traders