

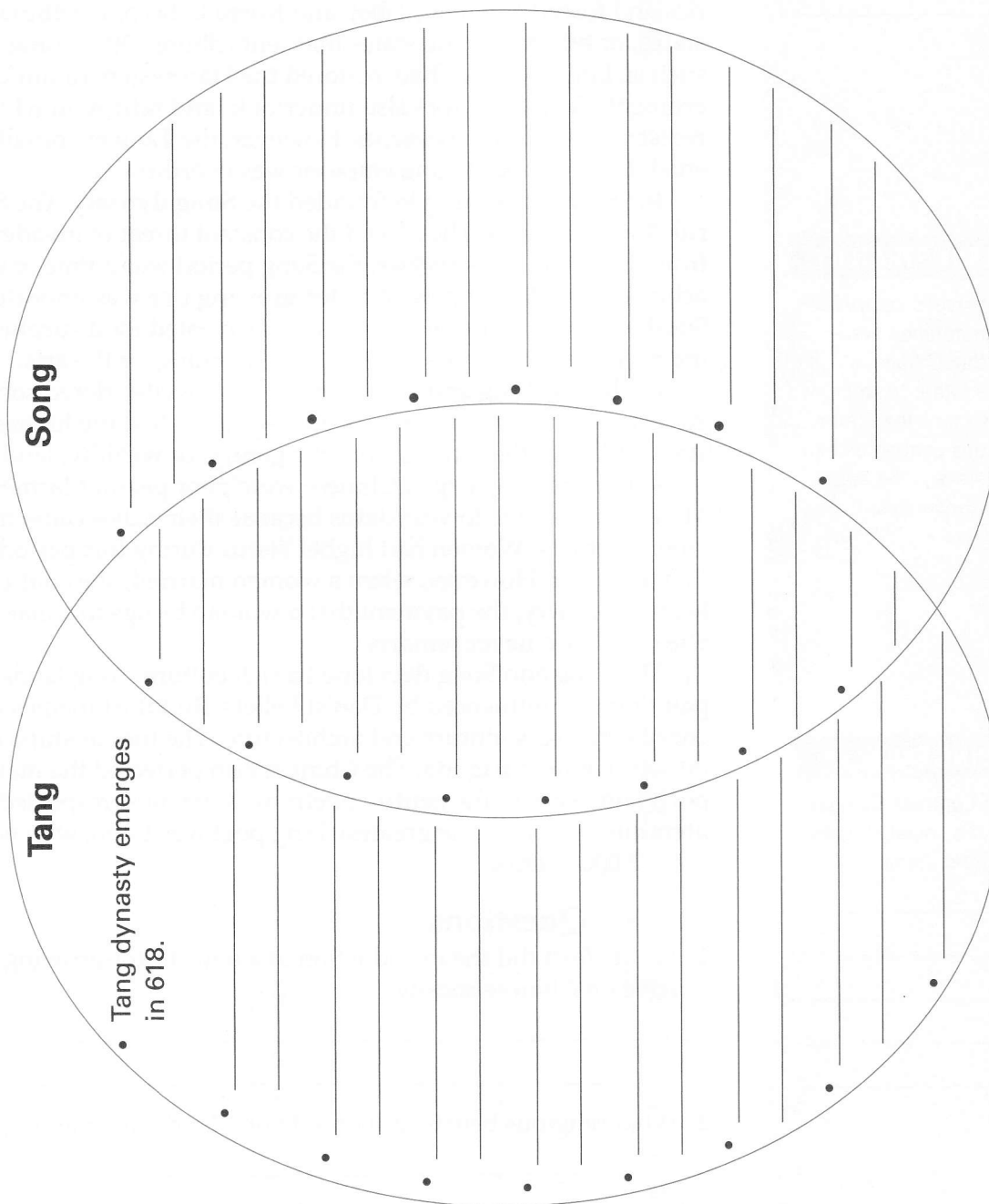
CHAPTER
12
SECTION 1

Note Taking Study Guide

TWO GOLDEN AGES OF CHINA

Focus Question: Describe the political, economic, and cultural achievements of the Tang and Song dynasties.

As you read this section, complete the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast the Tang and Song dynasties. Use the overlapping portion of the circles for information that applies to both dynasties.



CHAPTER
12
SECTION 1

Section Summary

TWO GOLDEN AGES OF CHINA

READING CHECK

What are tributary states?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *compelled* mean in the underlined sentence? Note that Li Shimin *compelled* his father to step down and then took the throne himself. Use this context clue to help you understand the meaning of the word *compelled*.

READING SKILL

Compare and Contrast Compare and contrast the social classes in Tang and Song China.

After the Han dynasty collapsed, China broke apart. During the Sui dynasty (589–618), the emperor Sui Wendi reunited north and south. In 618, the general Li Yuan and his son Li Shimin led a revolt and established the **Tang dynasty**. Eight years later, Li Shimin compelled his aging father to step down. Li Shimin then took the throne under the name **Tang Taizong**. Later Tang rulers conquered many territories and forced Vietnam, Tibet, and Korea to become **tributary states**, or self-governing states that sent tribute. Other Tang rulers, such as Empress Wu Zhao, restored the Han system of uniform government. Tang emperors also undertook **land reform** in which they redistributed land to peasants. However, the Tang eventually weakened. In 907, the last Tang emperor was overthrown.

In 960, Zhao Kuangyin founded the **Song dynasty**. The Song ruled for 319 years. They faced the constant threat of invaders from the north. Nonetheless, the Song period was a time of great achievement. A new type of faster-growing rice was imported from Southeast Asia. The rise in productivity created food surpluses, freeing more people to pursue commerce, learning, or the arts.

Under the Tang and Song, China was a well-ordered society. At its head was the emperor. Scholar-officials had the highest social status. Most of them came from the **gentry**, or wealthy, landowning class. The vast majority of Chinese were poor peasant farmers. Merchants had the lowest status because their riches came from the labor of others. Women had higher status during this period than they did later. However, when a woman married, she could not keep her **dowry**, the payment that a woman brings to a marriage. She could also never remarry.

The Tang and Song developed a rich culture. Song landscape painting was influenced by Daoist beliefs. Buddhist themes influenced Chinese sculpture and architecture. The Indian stupa evolved into the Chinese **pagoda**. The Chinese also perfected the making of porcelain. Among the gentry, poetry was the most respected form of literature. Probably the greatest Tang poet was Li Bo, who wrote some 2,000 poems.

Review Questions

1. What effect did the introduction of a new, faster-growing rice have on Chinese society?

2. What religious beliefs influenced Song landscape painting?
