WHO WAS GENGHIS KHAN?
HOW DID HE BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL RULER OF HIS TIME?
HOW DID THE MONGOL EMPIRE INFLUENCE HISTORY?

The Genghis Khan: Bring the Legend to Life exhibit invites you and your students to consider these questions as you explore the ancient empire of Mongolia.
During your visit, students will:
- See artifacts from ancient Mongolia.
- Encounter historical characters and learn about their lives.

After your visit, students will:
- Think about how warfare influences civilization.
- Be curious to explore other cultures of the world.

Quick Tips
- The exhibit is located on the third level of the Science Center. To enter the exhibit, take the silver elevators in the Bartol Atrium up to the top level and then turn left. Alternatively, you can take the main elevators in the Science Center up to level three and then turn left.
- On average, most groups will spend about 60 minutes in the exhibit, if carefully examining all of the displays. There is no re-entry allowed. Restrooms are located near the exhibit entrance in the Bartol Atrium behind the elevators. There are no restrooms inside the exhibit.
- No food or beverages are allowed in any of the exhibit galleries.
ABOUT THE EXHIBIT

The Franklin Institute is pleased to host *Genghis Khan: Bring the Legend to Life*.

Explore the culture, conquests, and heritage of history’s most memorable conqueror through the treasures and stories of Genghis Khan’s 13th-century Mongol Empire in *Genghis Khan: Bring the Legend to Life*.

The exhibition offers an adventure in the vast grasslands of Central Asia, amid the relics of Genghis Khan’s reign. Experience life in 13th-century Mongolia, entering the tents, battlegrounds, and marketplaces of a vanished world. Explore Genghis Khan’s life and those of his sons and grandsons during the formation, peak, and decline of the Mongol Empire.
HOW TO PREPARE

Students should know that many of the artifacts on display are authentic, original objects from the time of Genghis Khan.

Chaperones and students should know that the museum encourages conversation around the displays and children should ask questions and discuss what they see. Museum etiquette suggests that the conversation be kept to an appropriate indoor volume level.

Running through the exhibit is not allowed. Designate a meeting location within the exhibit when you arrive in case someone gets separated. Please do not congregate at the entrance/exit, however, so as to enable other guests to enter and exit easily.

There are no restrooms inside the exhibit and there is no re-entry allowed, so plan ahead and use the restrooms in the main Bartol Atrium before entering.

Note that the exhibit’s exit is through a gift shop which features items related to the exhibition at many price levels—from small souvenirs to collectible craft items. Be prepared to direct your students accordingly to allow them time to shop or to proceed directly through to your next destination.
EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

The Grasslands
After passing through the introductory theater area, your journey begins in the grasslands where you will discover the daily life of a nomad on the high plateaus of Central Asia and learn about Genghis Khan’s earliest influences. A centerpiece is the ger—the traditional Mongolian dwelling of the time.

Rise of the Mongols
The next area presents Genghis Khan’s rise to leadership. Learn how this young, charismatic leader united warring Mongol tribes in order to form an unrivaled cavalry. Explore the equestrian culture and innovations in weaponry to begin to understand how Genghis Khan leveraged the strengths of his people to achieve dominance over their enemies.

The Walled City
Enter the recreation of Karakorum, the walled city which became the capital of the Mongolian empire after Genghis Khan’s son inherited the kingdom. See how life changed for Mongols once they had vanquished all of their enemies. Arts and culture flourished as the need for war subsided.

The Silk Road
While Genghis Khan was a ruthless warrior, he was also a savvy statesman who developed written language and a sophisticated society with fair taxation, stable government, appreciation of the arts, religious freedom, and open trade along the Silk Road. Explore this vital trade route which enabled the exchange of both goods and ideas between cultures.

Mongolia Today
See images of modern Mongolian life and trace the influence of Genghis Khan. The distinctive horse-based culture of Genghis Khan’s time persists today, eight centuries after his rule.
WHO WAS GENGHIS KHAN?

Mysterious and Misunderstood: The Epic True Story of Genghis Khan (1162–1227 CE)

Genghis Khan—founder of the largest contiguous land empire the world has ever seen—is one of history’s immortals. His military legacy endured for centuries, and some of his civic improvements are still in use today.

Time magazine and The Washington Post both named Genghis Khan “the most important person of the last millennium.” But how much do we really know about this man? How did this illiterate, unsophisticated warrior-nomad have such a profound effect on world politics that his influence can still be felt more than 800 years later? The story of how this extraordinary man from a remote corner of Asia created an empire that led the world into the modern age is an enduring epic tale.

A Difficult Childhood Filled with Misfortune Helps Shape the Future Leader

Born Temüjin, Genghis Khan grew up amid the harsh landscape of Mongolia, in a world of tribal violence, kidnapping, murder, and enslavement. His father was murdered when Genghis Khan was just nine. His family, abandoned by their tribe, was left to survive extreme poverty, forcing Genghis Khan to learn survival, ambition, determination, and cruelty. His difficult childhood, as well as his nomadic heritage, helped shape him as a leader.

Ambitious, Strategic Young Adult Unites Mongolia

While still a teenager, Genghis Khan united the separate, warring Mongol clans and together they began to conquer other nomadic tribes. Conquering these rivals was a struggle, but the young, charismatic leader’s ability to form alliances and motivate his warriors eventually led to victory. Genghis Khan’s battle skills grew. He incorporated defeated warriors into his own army, usually killing their leaders first. He rewarded loyalty rather than honoring bloodlines. After many years, he was able to unite the tribes, forming the first unified Mongol nation.

Genghis Khan and His Descendants Conquer Half the Known World

Genghis Khan led a series of major military campaigns, each one enlarging his territories beyond his homeland, south into China and west into Iran. The Mongol war machine featured a ruthless leader, loyal officers, and fierce warriors, coupled with tight organization, swift movement, and brilliantly coordinated tactics. It was nearly impossible to defeat. As a result of these conquests, unprecedented trade and cultural exchanges followed.

Mystery Burial Ground

Genghis Khan died during a military campaign—or, in the words of the Mongols, for whom mention of death or illness is taboo, he “ascended into heaven.” His soldiers escorted the body back to his homeland for a secret burial without a mausoleum, temple, pyramid, or tombstone to mark the place where he lay. According to legend, all the soldiers and laborers involved with his burial were killed to keep its location secret. The location of the site remains one of archaeology’s greatest mysteries.
ABOUT MONGOLIA

During the 13th Century
At the height of his power, Genghis Khan ruled an empire that was four times the size of the Roman Empire and four times the size of the realm of Alexander the Great.

At its peak, the Mongol Empire covered 12 million contiguous square miles, an area the size of the continent of Africa. It stretched from the snowy tundra of Siberia to India, from the rice paddies of Vietnam to the wheat fields of Hungary, and from Korea to the Balkans.

The entire Mongol tribe under Genghis Khan numbered one million, 120,000 of whom served as warriors in the Mongol army.

Mongolia Today
Today, Mongolia is slightly smaller than the state of Alaska. Its population density (people per square mile) is the lowest of any country on Earth.

Mongolia’s average elevation is one mile above sea level.

After a period of Communist rule from 1921 to 1990, today Mongolia is a sovereign democratic republic.
FAST FACTS!

- “Genghis Khan” means “universal ruler.”

- Genghis Khan was tolerant of all religions. His people were permitted to practice any religion they chose including shamanism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and Taoism.

- Geneticists estimate that 16 million men alive today are genetic descendants of Genghis Khan, making him one of the most prolific patriarchs in history.

- During his lifetime, Genghis Khan never allowed anyone to paint his portrait or sculpt his image. After his death, however, his devoted followers captured his likeness in many ways and forms, preserving his image for future generations.

- Genghis Khan established the concept of passports to protect diplomats, merchants, and messengers.

- One legacy of Genghis Khan’s leadership is the use of a “cabinet” of advisors to set policy and make decisions.

- The Mongols were highly-skilled horsemen and their cavalry was the best the world has ever seen. Many children learned to ride horseback before they learned to walk.

- Mongolians were nomads who moved from place to place. They lived in gers which were large, round, felt-lined, wood-framed tents that could be easily moved.

- The Mongols developed and used the trebuchet—a weapon similar to a catapult. Without it, Genghis Khan’s cavalry might never have been able to defeat enemies in walled fortresses.
TRY THIS!

Where in the World?

Prepare for your visit to *Genghis Khan: Bring the Legend to Life* by orienting students to the geography of Central Asia. Use Google Maps to look at the region.

1. Go to maps.google.com.
2. Enter “Mongolia” in the search box.
3. Use the map’s view controllers to switch between satellite and map views, comparing features of each.
4. Also, zoom in and zoom out to examine the country’s borders.
5. Notice the topographical features of the map and how elevation levels are presented.
6. Call attention to Ulaan Baatar, the capital city of Mongolia today.

Discussion Questions

Today, Mongolia is a landlocked country. Depending on grade level, challenge students to explain what that means, based on the maps they see. Older students might discuss the implications of why being landlocked matters.

Compare Mongolia today with the map of ancient Mongolia. Discuss the differences.
TRY THIS!

Vocabulary Word Search

Asia
Empire
Genghis
Ger
Grassland
Horse
Khan
Mongolia
Nomads
Warriors
TRY THIS!

Vocabulary Word Search

Asia  Cavalry  Empire  Genghis  Ger  Grassland
Horse  Khan  Mongolia  Nomads  Plateau
Shamanism  Steppes  Temujin  Trebuchet  Warriors
GENGHIS KHAN: BRING THE LEGEND TO LIFE

Suggested Resources for K-12 Classrooms and Libraries

**Elementary School**

*Genghis Khan*
b by John Bankston
ISBN 1612284329

**Middle School**

*Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire*
b by Miriam Greenblatt
ISBN 0761410279

*Life in Genghis Khan’s Mongolia*
b by Robert Taylor
ISBN 1560063483

**High School**

*Genghis Khan and the Making of the Modern World*
b by Jack Weatherford
ISBN 0609809644

*Genghis Khan: Life, Death, and Resurrection*
b by John Man
ISBN 0312366248

*In Search of Genghis Khan: An Exhilarating Journey on Horseback across the Steppes of Mongolia*
b by Tim Severin
ISBN 0815412878

**Recommended Websites**

*The Land of Genghis Khan*
www.nationalgeographic.com/genghis/trail.html

*Genghis Khan*
www.history.com/topics/genghis-khan
An exploration of the *Genghis Khan: Bring the Legend to Life* exhibit can help students achieve learning objectives as called for by national standards.

**Benchmarks for Science Literacy**

7. Human Society  
7a. Cultural Effects on Behavior  
7b. Group Behavior  
7f. Social Conflict

**Common Core English Language Arts**

K-5: Reading Informational Text  
6-12: Literacy in Science & Technical Subjects

**National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies**

K-12: Theme 1: Culture  
K-12: Theme 3: People, Places, & Environments

**National Standards for History**

K-4: Topic 4: Standard 7A  
5-12: World Era 5: Standard 3A&B

**National Core Arts Standards — Visual Arts**

AS7: Perceive & analyze artistic work  
AS8: Interpret intent & meaning in artistic work  
AS10: Synthesize & relate knowledge & personal experiences to make art  
AS11: Relate artistic ideas & works with societal, cultural, & historical context to deepen understanding