

Disasters!

Chang Jiang (Yangtze River) Flood of 1931

Throughout Chinese history, the flooding of the Chang Jiang has cost millions of lives. On average, the Chang Jiang has caused a major flood about every 50 years, although in the past century or so the floods have been more frequent. The floods of 1931 and 1954 were particularly devastating. The 1931 flood resulted from monsoon rains. In May and June of that year, six enormous waves poured down the river, demolishing dams and dikes. More than 35,000 square miles of land were flooded and many thousands of people died. Floods along the Chang Jiang continue to the present day. Bad floods occurred in both 1996 and 1998.

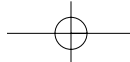


Nanjing was one of the cities in China that remained underwater for weeks because of the 1931 flood.

Wuchang, Hanyang, and Hankou are three cities that make up one huge urban complex called Wuhan. Much of **Wuhan** remained underwater for more than four months in 1931. The water ranged from 6 feet to 20 feet in depth.

The Three Gorges Dam is currently under construction to control the flooding of the Chang Jiang.





In the city of Hankou during the flood, wealthy people traveled in boats while poor tradespeople waded up to their necks through the water.

This panoramic aerial view of one of the Chinese cities flooded in 1931 was taken by Charles Lindbergh. He was the American aviator who had made the first solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927.

Along the Chang Jiang, human labor is still essential for flood control. These laborers work with shovels and other tools to fortify the banks of the river with dirt to prevent flooding.



GeoActivity

UNDERSTANDING FLOODS

Working with a partner, use the Internet to research one of the floods listed below. Then create a **presentation** about it.

- Create a diagram showing the extent of the flood, the damage caused by it, and the number of lives lost.
- Add a map of the affected region.
- Write a paragraph explaining how the flood affected the people and life of the region.



RESEARCH LINKS
CLASSZONE.COM

GeoData

OTHER DEADLY RIVER FLOODS

1887

Huang He in northeastern China; possibly more than 1,000,000 people killed

1889

Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on May 31; about 2,200 deaths (more than any other river flood in U.S. history)

1911

Chang Jiang in China; 100,000 killed

1937

Mississippi and Ohio rivers; about 250 killed

1988

Three major rivers in Bangladesh; about 1,600 deaths

1993

Mississippi River; millions of acres flooded; about 50 dead

1998

Chang Jiang in China during July and August; about 4,000 dead