Literacy Lowdown
To advance your wider reading

A Level students should:

- undertake wider reading.
- use factual texts and discursive / creative material.

Summary
The Silk Roads is a historical piece of work that attempts to reorientate the reader’s world centre described as ‘a powerful corrective to parochialism’ due to its wide-ranging geography. This is a review of Chapters 1 to 9. The book quickly starts by explaining that the first towns and cities were in the alluvial rich lowlands of the ‘Fertile Crescent’ in Mesopotamia. Described as the prototype for globalisation this network of roads was the real ‘cradle of civilisation’, rather than the Mediterranean.

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Specification Links
Changing Places AQA 3.2.2.1. How the demographic, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of places are shaped by shifting flows and Eduqas 2.2.1 Globalisation, migration, and a shrinking world ‘A dazzling city rose up from the marshes, adorned with glorious churches and beautiful palazzi, built on the lucrative proceeds of prolific trading with the east…Venice’s growth came from its willingness to sell future generations into captivity’ p123. Globalisation Edexcel 3.1 Globalisation is a long-standing process which has accelerated over time and OCR 2.1 Changing Spaces, Making Places ‘it was not only goods that flowed along the arteries that linked the Pacific, Central Asia, India, the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean in antiquity; so did ideas’ p25.

Key Quotes
Constantinople was situated in a commanding position for other sensitive routes, not least maritime traffic in and out of the Black Sea, and also as a listening point for developments to the east and also the north — in the Balkans and towards the plains of Pannonia, where trouble was brewing p25 The Road of Faiths

One tribe now established themselves as masters on the steppes, crushing all before them. They were the Xiongnu — better known in the west as the Huns p46 The Road to the Christian East

Famous for their caravans, financial acumen, and close family ties…the Sogdians were the glue that connected towns, oases, and regions p57 The Road to the Christian East

The Muslims’ conquest had brought a vast web of trade and communication routes under their control…most striking of all, however, was the construction of an enormous new city. It was to become the richest and most populous in the world, and remained so for centuries…we know it as Baghdad p93 The Road to Concord

The fleets of the city-states (Genoa, Pisa, and Venice) put them in a powerful negotiating position when it came to dealing with the new masters of the Holy Land p141 The Road to Heaven