

Discovering Ancient China with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand the significance and innovations of Ancient Chinese civilisation.

Read the passage carefully about Ancient China. Answer the questions below in full sentences, using evidence from the text where possible.

Ellie the Elephant loves to travel back in time to learn about the past. She recently visited Ancient China, a land of great discovery. Ancient China was ruled by powerful families called dynasties. The people were famous for inventing many things we still use today. One of their most precious items was silk, a soft fabric made by silkworms. They kept the secret of how to make it for hundreds of years, trading it along a long path known as the Silk Road.

Ancient Chinese inventors were very clever. They created the compass, which helped sailors find their way across the sea using magnets. They also invented paper, which made it much easier to write down important stories and record history. The people lived in beautiful homes with curved roofs and worked hard on their farms growing rice and tea. They had a deep respect for their ancestors and celebrated many colourful festivals. Through their hard work and creativity, the people of Ancient China built a civilisation that changed the world forever. Ellie thinks it is amazing how much we owe to these early inventors.

Word bank: civilisation · dynasty · innovation · silk · navigation · ancestors

1. Name two items that were invented by the people of Ancient China. (2 marks)

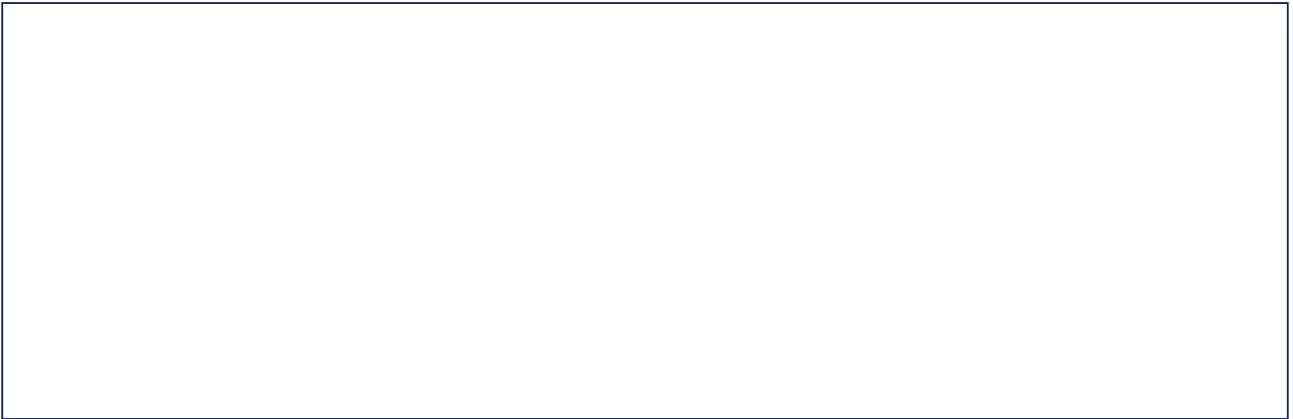
2. What was the 'Silk Road' used for? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think the Chinese people kept the secret of how to make silk for so long? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, how did the invention of the compass change life for people in Ancient China? (2 marks)

5. Which invention mentioned in the text do you think is the most important for children today? Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene from Ancient China including a silkworm, a compass, and a building with a traditional curved roof.



Extension challenge: Research one other invention from Ancient China, such as gunpowder or block printing, and write three sentences explaining how it works.