

The Wonders of Ancient China

Learning objective: To understand key achievements and daily life in Ancient China, identifying historical significance.

Read the passage carefully. Use the word bank to help you understand tricky terms. Answer the questions in full sentences, ensuring you justify your points for the higher-mark questions.

Ancient China was a fascinating civilisation that lasted for thousands of years, governed by a series of powerful families known as dynasties. Ellie the elephant, who loves to study history, often remarks that Ancient China gave the world incredible inventions that we still use today. During the Han Dynasty, clever inventors created paper, which changed how people recorded their stories and laws forever. They also mastered the production of silk, a luxurious fabric that became so valuable it led to the creation of the Silk Road, a massive network of trade routes connecting China to the West. Beyond trade, the Emperor Qin Shi Huang ordered the construction of a vast army of life-sized terracotta warriors to protect him in the afterlife. This discovery shows how much the people valued craftsmanship and order. Living in Ancient China meant following strict social rules, where farming was highly respected because it provided food for the entire empire. Through their inventions and art, the people of Ancient China built a legacy that continues to influence our modern world.

Word bank: Dynasty: A line of hereditary rulers of a country. · Silk Road: An ancient network of trade routes. · Invention: A unique or novel device or method. · Terracotta: A type of fired clay, often brownish-red in colour. · Emperor: A sovereign ruler of an empire.

1. Identify two inventions or creations from Ancient China mentioned in the text. (2 marks)

2. According to the text, why did the Emperor Qin Shi Huang have an army of terracotta warriors made? (2 marks)

3. Why was the invention of paper particularly significant for the development of the civilisation? (3 marks)

4. Explain why the Silk Road was vital for the growth of Ancient China's economy. (3 marks)

5. Do you think the invention of silk was more important than the invention of paper? Justify your opinion using evidence from the text. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene from the Silk Road, showing a merchant carrying rolls of silk, or illustrate one of the terracotta warriors standing guard.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an inventor living during the Han Dynasty. Write a short diary entry describing a new invention you have created and explain why it would make life easier for the Emperor's people. What might happen if this invention was shared with other countries along the Silk Road?