

Ellie's Ancient China Expedition: Historian's Fact-File

Learning objective: To analyze and record key historical developments from the Shang Dynasty and beyond in Ancient China.

Use your textbook or research materials to fill in this fact-file. Ellie the elephant has provided prompts to help you organize your historical findings. Be precise with your facts and use formal historical vocabulary where possible.

Word bank: Dynasty · Ancestor · Oracle bones · Silk Road · Yellow River · Invention · Civilisation · Empire

1. The Geography of Power: Explain why the location of the Yellow River was significant for the development of early Chinese civilisation. (3 marks)

2. The Shang Dynasty: Describe the role of 'oracle bones' in Ancient China. What do they tell us about the beliefs of the people at that time? (3 marks)

3. Inventions and Innovation: Choose one significant invention from Ancient China (e.g., paper, silk, or the compass) and justify why it was a transformative development for the world. (4 marks)

4. Compare and Contrast: How did the lives of farmers differ from the lives of the ruling classes in Ancient Chinese society? (4 marks)

5. Evidence Analysis: Look at an image of a bronze vessel or a piece of jade from this period. What might this object tell a historian about the craftsmanship of the Shang Dynasty? (3 marks)

6. Critical Thinking: What might have happened to the growth of the Chinese Empire if the trade routes, such as the Silk Road, had never been established? (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are an explorer traveling along the Silk Road. Write a short, formal diary entry (100–150 words) describing the goods you are trading, the landscape you are crossing, and the challenges you face. Use at least four words from the word bank in your writing.