

Ancient China: Dynasties and Discoveries

Learning objective: To understand the significance of the Shang and Qin dynasties and identify key inventions from Ancient China.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of Ancient China to write detailed, accurate answers. Ellie the elephant is here to help you remember the key facts!

Ellie the elephant has been exploring the history of Ancient China. She has learned about the early Shang dynasty, which was famous for its expert use of bronze and its unique writing system found on oracle bones. Later, the Qin dynasty unified the country under the first Emperor, who began building the Great Wall and commissioned thousands of life-sized clay soldiers to guard his tomb. Ancient China also gave the world amazing inventions like paper, the compass, and gunpowder, which changed history forever.

Word bank: Dynasty · Emperor · Oracle bones · Terracotta Army · Silk Road · Great Wall · Invention · Bronze

1. Explain why the Shang dynasty is often associated with the use of bronze. How did they use this material? (2 marks)

2. Who was the first Emperor of China, and what was the main purpose of building the Terracotta Army? (2 marks)

3. Ancient China contributed many inventions to the world. List two of these inventions and describe how one of them might have helped people in their daily lives. (3 marks)

4. What was the 'Silk Road' and why was it so important for the trade of goods and ideas between China and the rest of the world? (2 marks)

5. If you were an archaeologist discovering an oracle bone, why would it be considered a valuable historical source? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of a section of the Great Wall of China as it might have looked during the Qin dynasty, including a watchtower and a guard on duty.



Extension challenge: Research the process of making silk in Ancient China. Write a short paragraph explaining why silk was a closely guarded secret for many years.